This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

954 .R93 V.9 C.2
Warren Hastings and th
Stanford University Libraries
3 6105 048 871 300

Rulers of India

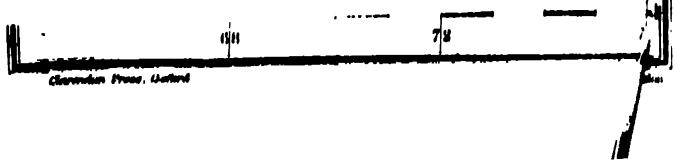
EDITED BY

SIR WILLIAM WILSON HUNTER, K.C.S.I.

C. I. E.: M.A. (Oxford): LL.D. (Cambridge)

WARREN HASTINGS

HENRY FROWDE, M.A.
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
LONDON, EDINBURGH
NEW YORK AND TORONTO


Clarendon Press, Oxford

RULERS OF INDIA

Warren Hastings

AND THE FOUNDING OF THE BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

By CAPTAIN L. J. TROTTER

AUTHOR OF 'INDIA UNDER VICTORIA,' ETC.

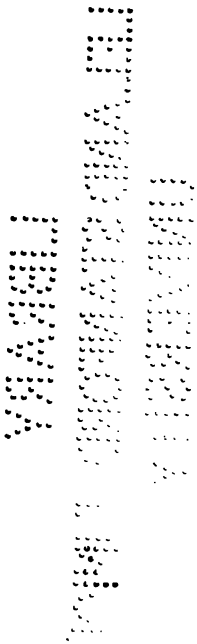
SEVENTH THOUSAND

OXFORD

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS: 1905

OXFORD
PRINTED AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
BY HORACE HART, M.A.
PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

102059



CONTENTS

CHAP.			PAGES
I.	1732-1761.	FROM CHURCHILL TO CALCUTTA . .	7-25
II.	1761-1769.	CHEQUERED FORTUNES	26-43
III.	1769-1772.	THE ENGLISH IN MADRAS . . .	44-56
IV.	1772-1774.	THE NEW ORDER IN BENGAL . .	57-75
V.	1772-1774.	THE ROHILLÁ WAR	76 92
VI.	1773-1775.	THE REGULATING ACT	93-109
VII.	1775-1777.	HASTINGS AGONISTES	110-129
VIII.	1776-1778.	ROUT OF PHILIP FRANCIS . . .	130-143
IX.	1778-1784.	THE SAVIOUR OF INDIA . . .	144-160
X.	1779-1781.	THE COUNCIL AND THE SUPREME COURT .	161-173
XI.	1781-1783.	BENARES AND OUDH	174-186
XII.	1781-1785.	THE CROWNING OF A GREAT CAREER .	187-200
XIII.	1785-1818.	HASTINGS IN ENGLAND . . .	201-215

NOTE

The orthography of proper names follows the system adopted by the Indian Government for the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*. That system, while adhering to the popular spelling of very well-known places, such as Punjab, Lucknow, &c., employs in all other cases the vowels with the following uniform sounds:—

a, as in woman: *á*, as in father: *i*, as in police: *í*, as in intrigue: *o*, as in cold: *u*, as in bull: *ú*, as in sure: *e*, as in grey.

PREFACE

DURING the present year three folio volumes of 'Letters, Despatches and other State Papers preserved in the Foreign Department of the Government of India, 1772—1785,' have been printed by Authority, under the careful editing of Mr. George W. Forrest. The period covers the entire rule of Warren Hastings. The present volume endeavours to exhibit in a popular form the actual work of that great Governor-General, as reviewed from the firm standpoint of the original records which Mr. Forrest has now made available to students of Indian history.

August, 1890.

CHAPTER I

From Churchill to Calcutta

1732–1761

Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of British India, was born at Churchill in Oxfordshire on the 6th December, 1732. A few miles off, across the Worcestershire border, lay the manor of Daylesford, which had belonged to Warren's forefathers from the days of Henry II down to the first years of George II. One conspicuous member of the family was that Lord Hastings, whose loyal services to the House of York were requited by Richard III with a violent death. On his successor Henry VII bestowed the Earldom of Huntingdon, a title which ere long fell dormant until, in 1819, the right to bear it was confirmed to Francis Hastings, as lineal descendant of the second Earl. From another branch of the same stock had sprung the Earls of Pembroke, one of whom followed the banner of the Black Prince in the war between Peter the Cruel and his brother Henry of Castile.

At the close of the great civil war which cost our first Charles both crown and life, the fortunes of the Daylesford family had undergone a sad eclipse.

Having freely risked his life and pledged or parted with nearly all his property in aid of the losing cause, John Hastings was fain at last to make over all his Yelford lands to Speaker Lenthall, and bury himself in the old decayed manor-house at Daylesford. In 1715 Daylesford itself was sold by Samuel Hastings to a Bristol merchant. Samuel's son, then Rector of the parish, had two children, of whom Pynaston, the younger, was only fifteen years old when in 1730 he married Hester Warren, daughter of a gentleman who owned a small estate in Gloucestershire. The young wife died but a few days after the birth of Warren, her second child; and a few weeks or months later Pynaston himself disappeared from Churchill, to seek his fortune elsewhere. The care of his motherless children devolved on their paternal grandfather, whose straitened means ere long drove him to accept a curacy at Churchill. Meanwhile Pynaston's elder brother, Howard, was earning his livelihood as a clerk in His Majesty's Customs.

The rest of the truant widower's life-story is soon told. Within two years he had married again, this time a butcher's daughter. By-and-by he took holy orders, and went out as chaplain to the West Indies, where he ultimately died. Nothing more is known, or perhaps is worth knowing, of the man who begot one of the greatest Englishmen of the eighteenth century. Pynaston served at least as a link in the chain of hereditary causes which helped to foreshape the character of his son. In after years it pleased

Burke's distempered fancy, fed by some scandal which Francis brought from India, to taunt Warren Hastings with his 'low, obscure, and vulgar origin.' Had the charge been never so well founded, it could have taken nothing from the honour due to one whose public record needed no blazonry from the College of Heralds. It is clear that Hastings was a gentleman by birth and breeding; and his great accuser has only bespattered himself with the mud which he flung so recklessly at the object of his wrath.

From the village school at Churchill, where tradition said that he 'took his learning kindly,' little Warren at the age of eight was transferred by his uncle Howard to a school at Newington-Butts, near London. Child as he was, he had already conceived a purpose which many years afterwards blossomed into a fact. One bright summer's day, as he lay and mused beside a stream which skirted his native village, he 'formed the determination to purchase back Daylesford.'

The boys at Newington appear to have been well taught, but very poorly and scantily fed. After two years of semi-starvation, which no doubt stunted his growth and impaired his natural strength, Warren was removed to Westminster School, of which Dr. Nichols was then head-master. The list of under-masters included the scholarly Vincent Bourne. Among Warren's schoolfellows were Lord Shelburne, Churchill, Cowper, and his lifelong friend, Elijah Impey. In mental aptitudes and fine scholarly tastes

the bard of Olney and the future Chief Justice of Bengal had much in common with their younger associate. And that boyish friendship held them fast together in after years. When Hastings was impeached by the House of Commons, Cowper steadily refused to believe him guilty. From the day when Impey clasped hands again with Hastings in Calcutta there grew up between them an intimacy which even sharp public differences could not permanently impair.

Young Warren's life at Westminster gave fair promise of future achievement. A strong brave soul lay seething within his puny frame. 'Quick he was and mild,' says Greig; 'much addicted to contemplation, and a hard student; but he was likewise bold when necessity required, full of fire, ambitious in no ordinary degree, and anxious to excel in everything to which he addressed himself.' He liked playing at cricket, but his favourite pastimes were swimming and rowing, in both of which he acquired no common skill. His sweet temper and engaging manners seem to have made him a general favourite, while his cleverness and diligence in school-hours won many an approving comment from the head-master himself.

In 1747 he came out first on the list of candidates for a King's Scholarship; Impey taking only the fourth place. Two years later the death of his good uncle changed the whole course of Warren's life. His new guardian, a distant relative named Chiswick, *was a Director* of the East India Company. He

resolved to send Warren off to Bengal as a 'writer' in the Company's service. Dr. Nichols strongly remonstrated against such a step. 'What! Lose my favourite pupil, the best scholar of his year!' In vain he offered to keep Warren at school and send him afterwards to college at his own charge. In 1749 Chiswick took the youth away from Westminster, that he might learn accounts and book-keeping from a competent teacher. In the following January Warren Hastings sailed off in the *London* for Calcutta. The voyage lasted far beyond the average limit of six months. October had set in before Hastings landed on the scene of his future trials and imperishable renown[1].

At this time the East India Company were taking breath after one of those momentous crises which marked every stage in their career. 'Merses profundo, pulchrior evenit,' sums up the tale of their fortunes during the past hundred years. Towards the end of the seventeenth century they had wellnigh been driven out of Western India and Bengal. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 alone saved them from losing all their settlements in Southern India. It was mainly in their youngest settlement of Calcutta, with its offshoots up the Ganges, that they drove a prosperous trade, under the wing of a Mughal Viceroy who knew how to protect the foreigner from all exactions save his own. During the recent fight for supremacy

[1] Gleig's *Life of Warren Hastings*. E. B. Impey's *Memoir of Sir Elijah Impey*. Macaulay's notion that young Hastings 'hired Impey *with a ball* or a tart' to fag for him, is egregiously absurd.

between the French and English on the Coromandel Coast, there was perfect peace among the factories of rival nations, French, Dutch, and English, in Bengal. Under the strong yet peaceful rule of Alí Vardi Khán Calcutta grew into a rich and populous town, and the Company's warehouses were loaded with silk and cotton stuffs, with saltpetre, lac, and spices, which the tall Indiamen lying near in the Húglí would ere long be carrying home.

The Súbahdár or Viceroy of Bengal was still in name a Lieutenant of the Great Mughal who held his court at Delhi. But the glory of the House of Bábar had begun to wane even in the lifetime of Aurangzeb. Within half a century since his death it had 'gone glimmering in the dream of things that were.' Nothing remained of it save a dim twilight which seemed already dying into the dark. The Mughal Empire of Delhi, which at one time covered nearly the whole Indian Peninsula, had now dwindled, in all but name, into a group of districts surrounding the cities of Delhi, Agra, and Allahábád. Delhi itself was sacked in 1739 by the Persian conqueror, Nadír Sháh. In the name of the Delhi Emperor, Mughal, Pathán, and Persian adventurers founded dynasties for themselves in Oudh, Rohilkhand, Bengal, and the Deccan; while the daring Maráthás were wresting from his sway province after province in Southern, Western, and Central India, and the fiery Sikhs in the North-West were fighting against the Afghán Ahmad Sháh for the sovereignty of the Punjab. Despoiled alike by

its enemies and its seeming friends, the Mughal Empire was fast crumbling to pieces after two centuries of supremely vigorous life.

In 1750 the Company's settlements in Bengal, Bombay, and Madras, were governed each by a President and a Council of senior merchants. The President's salary was then but £300 a year, while those of his Councillors ranged from £40 to £100. The senior merchants received £40, junior merchants £30, factors £15, and writers only £5 a year. The surgeons drew no more than £36. On such pittances no Englishman could have lived with decency in such a climate, even though the Company allowed him free 'commons' and a yearly supply of Madeira from their own stores. But the Company's servants were permitted to eke out their pay with the profits of private trade; a permission which certain of them caught at so eagerly, that complaints often reached the India House touching the extravagance of young fellows who sat down to dinner with a band of music, and rode out in a carriage and four. It appears, on the other hand, that some young writers, less fortunate or more prudent, went to bed soon after sunset, rather than bear the cost of candles and supper.

Hastings was neither weak, greedy, nor dissolute; nor does he appear to have finished his daily course with the sun. As a clerk in the Secretary's office he helped to keep the ledgers, and to look after the warehousing of the goods collected by a staff of *gumáshtas* and their native underlings of various

grades. His leisure hours were spent in learning the native languages and in such recreations as suited his purse, his temperate habits, and his fine social instincts. In those days all business was over by noon, when the younger men dined together in the common hall. Then came the afternoon siesta, to which punkahs were still unknown. Towards sunset our countrymen took the air in palankeens, or glided in native barges along the broad river. The factory buildings and 'godowns' were surrounded by the brick walls and bastions of a fort which held a garrison of about two hundred men, most of whom were Sepoys. Within the walls were also good gardens and fish-ponds, and a hospital for the sick. The Company's servants were not ill lodged in quarters overlooking the river. A chaplain read prayers to them daily, and preached on Sundays. Justice, of a rude and summary kind, chiefly in the shape of fines and floggings, was administered by a Mayor, from whose sentence an appeal lay to the Council itself[1].

Calcutta, as described by one who saw it in those days, was already a 'large, fair, and populous' town, containing 'many private English merchants and several rich Indian traders' who supplied the Company with goods brought down for export from inland. Across the Húglí were docks for repairing and careening the Company's ships. The trade of

[1] Wheeler's *Early Records of British India*. Dr. Busteed's *Echoes from Old Calcutta*.

Bengal supplied 'rich cargoes for fifty or sixty ships yearly; besides what was carried in smaller vessels to the adjacent countries.' In saltpetre alone, of which they had the monopoly, the Company drove a traffic so lucrative, that their Dutch and French rivals on the Húglí tried all they could to wrest some part of it from their hands. Two years after Hastings reached Calcutta, its population was reckoned at 400,000 souls, most of whom huddled together in low mud huts on ground which, during the rainy season, became a mere bog[1]. At all seasons fever and dysentery brooded over a town begirt by swamp and jungle, whose only scavengers were jackals, kites, vultures, and crows.

In October, 1753, Hastings was sent up to the flourishing factory at Kásimbázár on the Ganges, two miles below Murshidábád, the capital of Bengal. Among the silk-weavers and ivory-workers of what was then the great trading-centre of the richest province in India, he discharged his new duties so well and honestly, that within two years he rose to a seat in the factory council, of which Watts was then chief. From the first he seems, by his own account, to have led a quiet, solitary kind of life, much taken up with his own thoughts and purposes, making no intimate friendships, and indulging neither in the pleasures nor the vices of his day.

The death of Alí Vardi Khán in April, 1756, was the beginning of troubles for the English in Bengal.

[1] Grose's *Voyage to the East Indies*. Hunter's *Imperial Gazetteer of India*.

Suráj-ud-daulá, his grandson and successor, had many of the vices without the redeeming virtues of an Asiatic despot. The failure of the Calcutta Council to acknowledge him formally as Súbahdár gave the pampered young Nawáb a new incentive for plundering the intrusive foreigners of the wealth he coveted for himself. Early in June the fortified factory at Kásimbázár surrendered without a blow to an overwhelming force; and Watts himself was carried off a prisoner to the Súbahdár's camp, already forming for a march southwards. Hastings was among the prisoners taken to Murshidábád. But the Súbahdár or his ministers were merciful for their own ends; and Hastings was set free on bail furnished by the friendly chief of a neighbouring Dutch factory.

Suráj-ud-daulá next turned his arms against Calcutta, whose governor, Roger Drake, had declined to surrender a native refugee of rank, or to cease from strengthening the weak defences of Fort William against the outbreak of another war between France and England. Drake's efforts to turn the crafty Nawáb from his settled purpose were answered by the quick march of an army, which closed round Calcutta on the 18th June, 1756. One or two outposts were bravely defended, but our people had no leaders equal to the need. Before nightfall the Nawáb was master of the town. A general panic, due not less perhaps to physical than to moral causes, soon filled the shipping on the river with fugitives of both sexes and of every age. Next morning Drake himself, with

several members of his council and the commandant of Fort William—made his way on board ship, leaving the rest of the garrison to their own devices. The ships then weighed anchor and dropped a few miles down stream.

Holwell, as a leading member of council, who had borne his part manfully in yesterday's fighting, now took command of the troops thus shamefully abandoned. All through that day and far into the next afternoon the wearied little garrison fought on against the doom which their recreant countrymen, safe on board the fleet, made no kind of effort to avert. At last, while Holwell was parleying for a brief truce, the assailants broke into the ill-guarded fort, and made prisoners of all who survived. By eight o'clock on the evening of June 20, one of the very sultriest in the Bengal year, a hundred and forty-six souls, including more than one woman, had been squeezed into a small guard-room about twenty feet long by fourteen wide, lighted by two small windows strongly barred. It was one of those cells or Black Holes in which a few soldiers were sometimes confined.

Of the horrors endured that night by its helpless inmates Holwell has left a plain unvarnished record which still falls short of the stern reality. No words, indeed, could express what even the imagination of Dante or Shakespeare might fail in all its ghastliness to conceive. The blaze of burning warehouses and bázárs intensified the torture of close tropical heat in that overcrowded prison, whose

windows looked merely into one end of a long arcade[1]. At six o'clock next morning, twenty-two men and one woman passed alive out of the stench of that deadly torture-room. Holwell, who had been saved almost by a miracle, was carried off, with several others, in irons to Murshidábád; while the rest were left to rejoin Drake's party on board the fleet then lying off Govindpur. A few days later the ships cast anchor at Falta, a village and Dutch station near the confluence of the Húglí with the Dámodar. Here Drake resolved to wait for the answer which Madras would surely send to his prayer for help against the Súbahdár.

On the 2nd August the refugees at Falta were cheered by the arrival of a ship which brought Major Kilpatrick and two hundred and thirty soldiers from Madras. Meanwhile Hastings kept Drake regularly informed of all that was going on, so far as he could learn, in Bengal. Presently supplies ran short in the camp at Falta, and disease played havoc among the troops. At Drake's request Hastings pleaded with the Súbahdár's ministers so successfully, that a native market was opened at Falta, which supplied Drake's people with the fresh food they sorely needed. He had also become the channel for secret correspondence between his chief and certain leaders of a plot against their oppressive master in his own capital. But the fear of detection drove him ere long in hasty flight to Chánár, and thence down the Ganges to his friends at

[1] Busteed's *Echoes from Old Calcutta.*

Falta. Here in the cool season he married the widow of a Captain Campbell, who had come over with Kilpatrick from Madras only to die of the prevalent disease. The two seem to have lived happily together until the lady's death in 1759. Her first child had died in early infancy, and the second survived her but a few years.

In December, 1756, Admiral Watson's fleet brought to Falta the long-expected succours from Madras. The troops were commanded by Colonel Robert Clive, whose capture and heroic defence of Arcot, in the war between the rival Nawábs of the Karnatic, had marked him out as a born leader of men in trying crises. Under chiefs so capable as Clive and Watson the shame of Drake's flight from Calcutta, with all that flowed therefrom, was speedily atoned for by the recapture of Fort William and by the vigorous movements which impelled Suráj-ud-daulá to sign the treaty of February, 1757. Hastings himself served as a volunteer in Clive's small army, and made himself useful in negotiating terms of peace with the bewildered Súbahdár.

The treaty was short-lived. At the first news of another French war in Europe, Clive and Watson hastened to attack and capture the French settlement of Chandarnagar in the teeth of the Súbahdár's commands and menaces. By the end of June, 1757, Plassey had been fought and won; and the successful plotter, Mír Jafar Khán, was installed by Clive at Murshidábád, *in the* place of the death-doomed Suráj-

ud-daulá. Scrafton became Resident at the new Nawáb's court, with Hastings for his assistant. Later in the year, when Clive was made Governor of Fort William, Scrafton took his seat in the Calcutta Council, and Hastings filled Scrafton's place at Murshidábád.

It was a perilous position for so young a man. But Hastings bore a very good character, and circumstances had made him older than his years. It was no easy matter for an Englishman so placed to discharge with equal skill and uprightness the various duties which now fell to his lot. He had to look after the Company's trade at Kásimbázár, to press unwelcome advice upon the new Nawáb, to guard against the intrigues of rival ministers and nobles, to collect the revenue of the districts lately ceded to the Company, and to refer to Calcutta all questions of special intricacy or importance. In Clive himself he found a bold hard-headed counsellor and a loyal friend. When Clive went home in February, 1760, Vansittart presently came from Madras to fill his place; Holwell acting meanwhile as Governor.

By that time Mír Jafar had exhausted the patience of his English allies. The Calcutta Council resolved to dethrone a ruler whose affairs were in wild disorder, and whose dominions they had had to defend at their own cost against plundering Maráthás, rebel barons, and a large Mughal army led by Sháh Alam, the homeless young Emperor of Delhi. It was the Company's troops that rescued Patná, drove the Mu-

ghal invaders out of Behar, and quelled a formidable revolt in Bengal itself. The treasury in Fort William had been drained nearly of its last rupee, and Mír Jafar had so squandered his own resources, that his troops were in open mutiny for many months' arrears of pay. At Madras our countrymen had been involved for years in a costly incessant warfare either with their French rivals or with the neighbouring 'country powers.' Bombay also had its own quarrels, intrigues, and difficulties; and the Company at home were hard pressed to find ways and means for keeping up their settlements in the far East.

After a brief but futile show of resistance Mír Jafar retired peaceably from a post which he had done so little to adorn. Escorted down the river by a guard of English soldiers and Sepoys, the dethroned Nawáb was safely lodged with his family and followers in a pleasant suburb of Calcutta. His son-in-law, Mír Kásim Alí, was installed as his successor at Murshidábád. Twice therefore in about three years the Calcutta merchants had played the part of king-makers. And they drove a yet harder bargain with the new Nawáb than Clive and Drake had driven with Mír Jafar. In return for their good services, he bound himself to pay off Mír Jafar's debts to the Company, to endow them with the revenues of Bardwán, Midnapur, and Chittagong, and he contributed five lakhs of rupees towards the war in the Karnatic. Nor was he allowed to forget the private interests of his new *patrons*. Vansittart himself, not a very grasping

man, pocketed a fee of £50,000, Holwell £27,000, and two other members of council £25,000 each. The bold Colonel Caillaud, fresh from routing the troops of Sháh Alam, refused at first his share of the common plunder; but the £20,000 allotted to him was remitted to his agents in England after his own departure from Bengal. Two other gentlemen received £13,000 each[1]. And these were the men who had just been denouncing the folly which led Mír Jafar to waste so much money on worthless or greedy favourites.

Such were the means by which many Englishmen amassed the fortunes which secured them place, power, or social advancement on their return home. Mír Kásim entered on his rule with an empty treasury and no clear prospect of replenishing it by other methods than violence and extortion. Hastings, who had done his best to keep Mír Jafar straight and himself clear of crooked practices, remained a few months longer at Murshidábád, until the order dismissing Holwell and two of his colleagues from the Company's service reached Calcutta in August, 1761. These gentlemen had signed the farewell letter in which Clive boldly rebuked his honourable masters for sundry acts of jobbery, corruption, and arbitrary injustice. One of the vacant seats in the Calcutta Council was reserved for Warren Hastings, whose worth Vansittart had already learned to estimate aright.

The first year of his new office closed or opened important epochs in the history of India. In January,

[1] Broome's *History of the Bengal Army*.

1761, on the plain around Pánípat, had been fought the decisive battle which broke for a time the power of the great Maráthá League, without repairing the fallen fortunes of the House of Bábar. Early in the same month Carnac scattered the Mughal forces at Suan; and Sháh Alam was glad to make peace on terms which recognised Mír Kásim as rightful Súbahdár of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. The same month saw the upshot of the long struggle between French and English in Southern India, which opened with the fall of Madras in 1746. Soon after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle and the death of the first and greatest Nizám of the Deccan, that struggle was renewed informally under the flags of rival claimants to South-Indian thrones. English officers strove to better the teaching of Dupleix, and the trained Sepoys of Clive and Lawrence fought like Englishmen against their French and native opponents. In 1757, when France and England were again at war in Europe, the struggle in Southern India became a regular grapple for life.

It went on with varying fortune until, in September, 1760, the daring Lally found himself shut up in Pondicherry by the foe whom he had once planned to drive into the sea. On the 16th of the next January, 1761, the capital of French India was surrendered by its starving garrison into the hands of the resolute Eyre Coote. Three months later the last of the French garrisons laid down its arms. The defences of Pondicherry were levelled to the ground; and the dreams of Dupleix, Bussy, and Lally remained for ever unfulfilled.

It is easy now to see how strangely events were working towards the issue which history has since recorded. Had Ahmad Sháh been defeated at Pánípat, a great Maráthá empire would have replaced the crumbling empire of the Mughals. But for the victories of Clive, Knox, Caillaud, and Carnac, our countrymen would have been driven out of Bengal. It was the money furnished by Mír Kásim which brought the siege of Pondicherry to a timely close, before Haidar Alí could march to the rescue of his French allies. But for the jealousies and dissensions of French officers and the absence of due support from home, the fight for empire between the rival settlers in Southern India might have been indefinitely prolonged. Plassey, Pánípat, and Pondicherry are names which represent three critical stages in the growth of our Indian rule. Plassey made us virtual masters of Bengal and Behar; Pánípat opened the way to future conquests northward of Behar; while Pondicherry left us free to dominate in course of time all the wide country that spreads from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal.

From this time forth the Company combine the pursuit of peaceful trade with the functions of an armed territorial power. As far back as 1689 one of their despatches contained these significant words: - 'The increase of our revenue is the subject of our care as much as our trade; 'tis that must maintain our force when twenty accidents may interrupt our trade; 'tis that must make us a nation in India.' They

were now drawing a goodly revenue not only from large tracts of fertile country in Lower Bengal, but from the Northern Circárs also, whence Bussy's soldiers had been driven out by the dashing Colonel Forde. In Bengal alone they had now a regular army of nearly 12,000 white men and Sepoys; the Dutch at Chinsurah, cowed by their late defeats, could give no further trouble; and the little cruisers of the Bombay marine had been doing good service against the pirates of the Malabar Coast. The great province of Bengal and Behar was ruled by a nominee of the Calcutta Council. From that path of empire, up which the Company were now creeping, no return was possible thenceforth. *Vestigia nulla retrorsum* is the moral of their subsequent career. The magnet of circumstance will draw them onward through a maze of wars, alliances, and conquests, to a height of political greatness surpassing that of Akbar and Aurangzeb.

CHAPTER II

Chequered Fortunes

1761-1769

'There is no page in our Indian history'—wrote Sir John Malcolm—'so revolting as the four years of the weak and inefficient rule of Mr. Vansittart.' In yet stronger language Macaulay declared that the interval between Clive's first and second administration 'has left on the fame of the East India Company a stain not wholly effaced by many years of just and humane government.' It was indeed a dismal period for the honour of the British name. Vansittart himself was a well-meaning person of average probity, but little force of character. Hastings, who had much force of character, combined with rare abilities and a name thus far unblemished, was still young both in years and official standing as compared with the leading members of Vansittart's Council. Under the vicious system which, many years afterwards, was the bane of Hastings' own administration, all power for good or evil lay with the majority in a council whose President had only the casting vote. Vansittart and Hastings were

continually outvoted by colleagues who showed small regard for any interests except their own.

In the first years of his rule Mír Kásim had done his best to deserve the goodwill of his English patrons. He had dismissed Mír Jafar's favourites, and made them disgorge the bulk of their ill-gotten wealth. Large arrears of pay had been disbursed not only to his mutinous soldiery, but to the Company's troops as well. With the money which he sent down to Calcutta our countrymen at Madras were enabled to complete the overthrow of the French. Noteworthy reforms were ordered in every branch of the Nawáb's government. Seldom indeed had justice been administered so firmly, or the revenues applied to ends so praiseworthy, as in the first two years of Kásim's rule in Bengal.

But this fair prospect was soon overclouded. The Hindu Governor of Patná had already been abandoned by his English friends to the power of a sovereign who charged him with retaining in his own coffers large sums of money due to the State. Hastings' place at the head of the Patná Factory had been filled by Ellis, the very worst man whom the Calcutta Council could have selected for such a post. Headstrong, violent, unscrupulous, he seemed to delight in sowing dissension between the Nawáb's officers and the Company's servants. Mír Kásim learned ere long to distrust his English allies, whose insolence equalled their rapacity. The privileges and immunities claimed by English traders and their

native friends rankled in the mind of a ruler who saw himself robbed of much revenue by the tricks and roguories that flourished everywhere under the English flag.

By virtue of former treaties the Company's goods were exempt from all tolls and duties in any part of Bengal. A *dastak* or pass, signed by the English Governor, secured a free passage for the goods. It was never intended to cover the private trade of the Company's servants, still less that of natives subject to the Nawáb of Bengal. But out of the exemption grew up a vast system of open smuggling, in which the Company's servants led the way. Every *gumáshta* or middleman, every native adventurer who could hire a *dastak* or fly a Company's flag, cheated the revenue in the same fashion. It was said that the youngest writer in the Company's service could make two or three thousand rupees a month by selling passes to native customers.

Nor were these the only offences charged against our countrymen. The Nawáb himself, in a letter to Vansittart, complained that 'all the English chiefs, with their gumáshtas, officers, and agents, in every district of the Government, act as collectors, renters, and magistrates, and, setting up the Company's colours, allow no power to my officers. And besides this, the gumáshtas and other servants in every district, in every market and village, carry on a trade in oil, fish, straw, bamboo, rice, paddy, betel-*nut, and other* things; and every man with a Com-

pany's dastak in his hand regards himself as not less than the Company[1].' Loud and bitter also were the murmurs of Mír Kásim's officers against those overbearing *Sáhibs* whose agents forced the people to buy and sell at the *Sáhibs'* own price, under pain of a flogging, and sat in judgment on their own causes without any regard for the decrees of the regular courts.

On his way up to Patná in April, 1762, Hastings reported to the Governor what his own eyes had seen. To his surprise every boat he met on the river bore the Company's flag, which was flying also from many places along the bank. At almost every village he found the shops closed and the people fled, for fear of fresh exactions at the hands of English merchants and their followers. What he saw then and afterwards convinced him that the lawless doings of his countrymen could 'bode no good to the Nawáb's revenues, the quiet of the country, or the honour of our nation[2].' It was the old tale of masterful adventurers working their mad will on neighbours too weak, timid, or indolent to withstand them. On the one side towered 'the strength of civilisation without its mercy;' on the other crouched a multitude of feeble folk, debased by centuries of foreign tyranny, caste oppression, and all the lowering influences of a tropical climate. The people of Bengal in fact were as sheep waiting to be shorn by men who would certainly shear them to the skin.

[1] Mill's *British India*, Book IV, ch. v.

[2] *Gleig's Warren Hastings*, vol. i.

But the main purpose of Hastings' journey was not to deal with this particular grievance. Vansittart had sent him to act as peacemaker in the disputes then simmering between Mír Kásim and the English at Patná. The Nawáb had lately transferred his capital from Murshidábád higher up the river to Monghyr. With the help of a few European adventurers he had begun to remodel his army after the European fashion. He had also made overtures of some kind to the Nawáb Wazír of Oudh. Within the new defences of Monghyr he set up an arsenal for the casting of guns and the manufacture of muskets, equal to any then made in Europe. Meanwhile Ellis himself indulged in acts of high-handed violence, which could only fan the flame of Kásim's growing resentment. His attempt to seize and punish one of the Nawáb's officers, for refusing to pass the private goods of a Company's servant duty-free, was followed by the arrest of another, who was sent down in irons to Calcutta, for daring to buy saltpetre on his master's account without the Company's leave. Early in 1762, he despatched troops from the Patná garrison to search for deserters in Monghyr. The native governor refused to admit the troops, but invited two of their officers to accompany him round the fort.

To Ellis this seemed only a fresh provocation. The troops were ordered to stand fast before Monghyr. Both parties appealed to Calcutta, whence Hastings at Vansittart's request started up country to see if he *could bring* matters to a peaceful issue. At Sásserám

he got speech of the Nawáb, who readily allowed the officer of Hastings' escort to go and search for deserters in Monghyr. The troops which had been sent thither returned quietly to Patná.

Mír Kásim also agreed to a plan propounded by Vansittart's envoy for abating the mischiefs caused by the conflict of rival powers and interests in Bengal. 'Nothing,' wrote Hastings, 'will ever reach the root of those evils, till some certain boundary be fixed between the Nabob's authority and our privileges.' But the plan which sought to define that boundary was disallowed by Vansittart's colleagues as an insult to the English name and a fraud upon the Company. At the end of three months, Hastings returned to Calcutta, conscious of the failure for which he was not to blame.

In November, 1762, Hastings went up again to Monghyr, in company with Vansittart, who still hoped to avert the war which some of his Council seemed bent on provoking. Kásim gave them a cordial welcome. After some discussion it was agreed on both sides that the inland trade of the Company's servants should be liable only to an *ad valorem* duty of nine per cent. on the cost of their goods at the place of purchase. In making this small concession to a perfectly just demand, Vansittart had reckoned without the majority of his Council. They were furious at the thought of surrendering a fraction of their own privileges for the general good. The new agreement was annulled with a storm of jeers.

Mír Kásim retorted by issuing in March, 1763, an edict which abolished all transit duties in Bengal.

This obvious remedy for the glaring injustice of a trade system which encouraged every form of fraud, plunder, and violence, robbing the Nawáb's treasury and impoverishing his people for the benefit of a band of greedy foreigners, evoked yet louder clamours than before against a prince who thus strove to place his own countrymen on an equal footing with their privileged rivals. In vain did Hastings and Vansittart plead for the right of a whole nation to trade in their own country on the terms arrogated by a few strangers from Western seas. The majority in Council resolved to let Kásim Alí Khán know the full measure of his wrongdoing towards the virtual arbiters of his fate. While two of their number hastened up country to demand the prompt withdrawal of the obnoxious edict, orders were sent to all the factories and garrisons to prepare in effect for war. Ellis at Patná found himself free to take his own way towards results which were soon to cost him and his comrades very dear.

The Nawáb saw his danger, but refused compliance with the demands of the English envoys. Despairing of further help from Calcutta, he began to seek it from the ruler of Oudh, with whom the still homeless Emperor, Sháh Alam, had found shelter. In spite of fresh provocations from Ellis, he still wavered on the brink of an armed struggle with his former friends.

'In what way have I deceived or betrayed you?'—*he wrote in* June to Vansittart. 'I never devoured

two or three crores of rupees of the treasure of Mír Jafar Khán. I never seized a bígha of the land belonging to Calcutta; nor have I imprisoned your gomashtas. Have I not discharged the debts contracted by the Khán aforenamed? Did I procure from you, gentlemen, the payment of the arrears of his army, or put you to the expense of maintaining the Company's forces? . . . . I gave you a country which produced near a crore of rupees. Was it for this only, that after two or three months you should place another on the *masnad* of the Nizámat?'

At this moment Hastings was undergoing a sharp cross-fire from both parties to the pending controversy. In the bitterness of his spirit the Nawáb traced all his troubles and misfortunes to Mr. Hastings, who had once counselled him to 'engage the English in his interests,' and to accept the fatal gift of government from their hands. In the same month of June the imputed 'author of all these evils' had been roundly reviled in the council-room by an angry colleague for defending Mír Kásim with the unscrupulous zeal of a hired solicitor. The strong language was followed up by a blow, for which Batson had to offer a full apology in terms dictated by the Council itself.

Some weeks earlier Hastings had vainly protested against the large powers which his colleagues resolved to bestow at such a juncture on the rash, wrongheaded chief of the Patná factory. The result was soon to justify his forecast. The arrest of an English merchant and the seizure of a boat-load of arms by the Nawáb's

officers drove Ellis headlong into open war. On the night of June 24 his troops carried the city of Patná with a rush. The Nawáb replied to this challenge by ordering the arrest of every Englishman in Bengal. Amyatt, a leading partisan of Ellis in the Calcutta Council, was slain in attempting to resist Mír Kásim's officers. Patná was recovered as easily as it had been lost; and ere long Ellis himself with many of his countrymen fell into the hands of a conqueror whose passions were already beyond control.

The campaign that followed was as glorious for our arms as the past three years had been disgraceful to our civilisation. In spite of the July rains the bold Major Adams began his victorious march through Bengal. In five months he led his little force of Europeans and Sepoys from Calcutta to the Karamnása; routing in two pitched battles many times his number of disciplined troops, winning four strong places by siege or assault, and capturing over four hundred pieces of cannon. Never before the great Mutiny was a hard campaign more splendidly fought against heavier odds. In requital for the rout of Giriah on August 2, Mír Kásim's fury could be slaked only by the blood of those who had fallen into his power. Several of his nobles and officers who had been friendly to the English were put to death. Two great Hindu bankers of the Seth clan were flung into the Ganges. The capture of Monghyr in September sealed the doom of his English prisoners *whom he* had safely lodged at Patná. Walter Rein-

hardt, known to Englishmen by his nickname of Sombre, which the natives turned into Sumru, was an Alsatian soldier of fortune, who had transferred his services from one flag to another, until he rose to high command under the Nawáb of Bengal. This ruffian, who had once deserted from an English regiment, cheerfully undertook the butcher's business for which none of Kásim's native officers would volunteer.

On the 5th October, 1763, nearly two hundred men, women, and children, were shot down or cut to pieces in Sumru's presence by two companies of his Sepoys. Many of the prisoners fought for their lives with brickbats, bottles, anything that came to hand. Their very executioners begged that weapons should be furnished to their victims, since the butchering of unarmed men was no fit work for armed soldiers. But Sumru struck down some of the murmurers, and the rest were driven to complete their repulsive task. Ellis himself, with more than fifty civil or military officers, was among the slain. Another victim was the same Lushington who, after surviving the horrors of the Black Hole, had served as Hastings' chief assistant at Murshidábád. Of all the prisoners at Patná one man only, Dr. Fullarton, was spared, to join Adams presently on his upward march[1]. The bodies of the murdered, one of them still breathing, were thrown into the nearest well.

On the 6th November, 1763, Patná was stormed by Adams' heroic little army. A week later they were

[1] Broome's *Bengal Army*. Busteed's Echoes from Old Calcutta.

hurrying forward in chase of a broken and disheartened foe. But before Adams could reach the Karamnása Mír Kásim and the butcher Sumru had found shelter beyond that stream with Shujá-ud-daulá, the Nawáb Wazír of Oudh. Worn out with toil and exposure, Adams threw up his command, and reached Calcutta only to die.

Meanwhile Mír Jafar, now old, leprous, and weak-witted, found himself reinstated as Nawáb in his former capital, on conditions which left him a mere tool in his patrons' hands. He promised to reimpose all the old transit duties against his own subjects, to restore to the Company's servants all their former immunities, and to pay large sums into the Company's treasury as compensation for public and private losses. In these arrangements neither Vansittart nor Hastings seems to have borne an active part. Both of them foresaw the brewing of new commotions with the reappearance of the old incentives. Vansittart, writing to the Court of Directors, declared his conviction that 'our connexions in this country are at present on a point where they cannot stand; they are either too great or too little[1].' Nor did Hastings stoop to soil his fingers with any of the money which his colleagues pocketed on account of losses incurred in the prosecution of an illegal trade.

In spite of Adams' victories, the fighting was not yet over. Mír Kásim found a willing champion in the Nawáb Wazír of Oudh. Early in 1764 Shujá-ud-daulá,

[1] Auber's *British Power in India*, vol. i.

accompanied by Sháh Alam and Mír Kásim, marched at the head of a powerful army towards the Karamnása. Repulsed from Patná on May 3, after many hours' hard fighting, he withdrew for the rainy season to Baxár. A few weeks later the mutinous spirit, which had been flashing out fitfully for some months past, broke forth again among the Sepoys with such violence, that Major Hector Munro was driven to quell it by blowing the ringleaders from the cannon's mouth. The mutineers returned to their senses and their duty; and in October Munro's force of seven thousand men, mostly Sepoys, with twenty-eight guns, began its eventful march upon Baxár.

On the 23rd of October, 1764, Munro won the splendid victory of Baxár, over fifty thousand of Shujá's troops, which included Sumru's disciplined brigades and thousands of those Afghán horsemen who had fought so bravely at Pánípat. Shujá's schemes of conquest in Hindustán and Kásim's hopes of vengeance on his English foes were wrecked for ever on that disastrous field. Munro's great victory opened the way to our subsequent capture of Allahábád, drove Sháh Alam to treat for peace and protection from his nominal protectors, and brought him in the following year, a needy and anxious suppliant, into the British camp. Not many months were to pass before Mír Kásim had fled for shelter into Rohilkhand, and the infamous Sumru, whom Shujá would not surrender and could no longer defend, was selling his services to the Játs of *Bhartpur, while* the twice-beaten Shujá himself was

fain to accept peace on their own terms from the virtual conquerors of Oudh.

When the news of Munro's victory reached Calcutta, Hastings resigned his seat in Council and made ready for the voyage home to the land where his only child, shipped off three years earlier, lay slowly dying under his aunt's care. Nothing but the outbreak of war with Kásim had prevented him from throwing up the Company's service in the middle of 1763. Vansittart also was glad to retire at such a moment from a post which had brought him little honour and vexations without end. In November the two sailed homewards together in His Majesty's ship *Medway*.

After a residence of fourteen years in India, Warren Hastings was still a poor man by comparison with other 'Nabobs' of his own standing. Of the modest fortune which he had scraped together, not a rupee appears to have been obtained by methods which in those days could have been called irregular. While men like Drake, Holwell, Clive, Vansittart, Carnac, made their thousands at one stroke out of the needs or the gratitude of native princes; while the Company's servants of all grades grew rich on bribes and perquisites drawn from native merchants, placemen, and landholders—Hastings kept proudly aloof from the general scramble for sordid or ill-gotten gains. To any one breathing an atmosphere so tainted, the temptation to enrich himself by whatever means must have been very cogent; nor had Vansittart's ablest *colleague forgotten* the purpose formed by the dreamy

child at Churchill. But his native honesty, or his proud self-respect, enabled him to walk cleanly through the mire which defiled so many Englishmen of his day, not only in India, but at home. 'It is certain'—as Macaulay has neatly phrased it—'that he was never charged with having borne a share in the worst abuses which then prevailed; and it is almost equally certain that, if he had borne a share in those abuses, the able and bitter enemies who afterwards persecuted him would not have failed to discover and to proclaim his guilt.'

Before leaving Calcutta, Hastings had sent his sister, Mrs. Woodman, a thousand pounds, in return, no doubt, for her care of his little son George, whose early death was the first news that greeted him on his landing in England. On the widow of his good uncle Howard he had settled an annuity of two hundred pounds. The bulk of his savings he had left in Bengal on security which, according to Gleig, was soon to fail him. Of the four years which he spent in England very little is known for certain. He was introduced to Dr. Johnson, whose personal knowledge of him was at least enough, as the great man afterwards wrote, to make him 'wish for more.' The literary tastes which had lent their polish to his minutes and despatches in Bengal found a new outlet in the writing of much prose and verse on various topics of the time. During his first winter at home he applied in vain to the Court of Directors for fresh employment in India. In the following year, 1766,

he gave some useful, straightforward evidence before a Parliamentary committee on Indian affairs.

About the same time Hastings laid before the India House a scheme which, forty years afterwards, gave birth to the Company's training college at Haileybury. He proposed that the Company should found somewhere in England a seminary at which their writers might gain due knowledge of Persian, in those days the official language of India, through competent professors imported from the East. Johnson probably looked with favour on a scheme which met with no encouragement in Leadenhall Street, where strict economy was the one cry.

Between his recent losses in India and his liberal outlay on relatives at home, Hastings presently found himself very short of funds. His second request for re-employment was not made in vain. In 1768 the Court of Directors, looking out for a trustworthy servant who would put things financially straight at Madras, appointed Hastings to a seat in the Madras Council 'next below Mr. Du Pré.' In their letter to the President and Council they spoke of the newcomer as 'a gentleman who has served us many years upon the Bengal establishment, with great ability and unblemished character.' Early in 1769 Hastings sailed from Dover on board the *Duke of Grafton* for Madras. Rather than stint his relatives of the aid derived from his bounty, he had been reduced to borrow the money for his own outfit.

During the past four years the Company's affairs

in India had gone through strange entanglements and momentous crises. In May, 1765, Lord Clive sailed up the Húglí as Governor and Commander-in-Chief at Fort William. By that time Carnac had driven the Maráthás back across the Jumna and compelled the ruler of Oudh to sue for peace on terms dictated by his conquerors. By a treaty concluded with Clive himself, Shujá agreed to pay a fine of half a million sterling to the Company, to grant the Company's servants free trade throughout his dominions, and to hand over to his liege lord Sháh Alam the districts of Kora and Allahábád. In return for these districts, and a yearly tribute of twenty-six lakhs from Bengal, the exiled Emperor bestowed, by grant, upon his English friends the *Díwání* or virtual government of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, a territory twice as large and populous as the British Islands, and yielding a revenue of three million pounds.

By this stroke of policy the Company practically disguised the true extent of their territorial greatness, under cover of the powers implied in a legal document signed by the titular head of a disembodied Empire. From the day when Mír Jafar was first seated on the *masnad* of Bengal, the sceptre of government had passed into their hands. But the Imperial *Farmán* might serve for a time to mask the transformation of a mere trading company into a great political power. A puppet sovereign might still hold his court at Murshidábád and pretend to administer justice through his own officers, while the Company's troops kept

guard over the public peace, and the Company's servants controlled the management of the public finances. On the death of Mír Jafar in 1765, his son Najm-ud-daulá was placed on the mock throne by those who had just been plundering his helpless father. Spencer and his colleagues in the Council took care to fill their own purses at the new Nawáb's expense. Twenty lakhs of rupees was the sum paid out to them from the depleted treasury at Murshidábád.

Clive's reappearance in Bengal put an end to all such atrocities, so long as he remained at his post. But illness sent him home again in 1767, before his task was half finished. In those two years however he had done much to retrieve the fortunes and the fair fame of his half-hearted employers. He had won from a needy Mughal emperor the charter which placed a merchant company on the throne of Bengal. By restoring his forfeit kingdom to the ruler of Oudh, he had turned a dangerous foe into an obedient ally. His strong will and dauntless courage had quelled a widespread mutiny among his English officers and overborne all resistance within his own Council. In spite of cabals around him and a grudging support in England, he had cut down or swept away some crying abuses in the Company's service, had retrenched some wasteful outlay, and done all in short that one man could do, under such conditions, to atone for the misrule, corruption, violence and financial blundering of the past five years.

During his voyage to Madras Hastings fell dan-

gerously ill. His chief nurse was a married lady, young, charming, accomplished, whose husband, Baron Imhoff, a poor German nobleman, was going out to seek his fortune at Madras. Between Hastings and Mrs. Imhoff the growing intimacy deepened into love. Imhoff's needs, or perhaps his good-nature, inclined him to make the best of an awkward complication. How far his wife's passion had then led her, may perhaps be a matter of opinion. By an arrangement made between the parties themselves, Mr. and Mrs. Imhoff were to live on together as man and wife, pending the issue of a divorce-suit which the lady was to carry on with Hastings' money and the Baron's consent in the Franconian courts. Gleig assures us that Mr. and Mrs. Imhoff 'lived together with good repute,' first in Madras and afterwards in Calcutta. And Macaulay, for once agreeing with the reverend chaplain, assumes that Hastings' love, like all his passions, was not less strong and deep than 'patient of delay.' Certain it is at least, that self-control and a tender chivalry towards women were equally prominent traits in Hastings' character.

CHAPTER III

The English in Madras

1769-1772

When Warren Hastings landed, in 1769, at Madras, his new chief, Du Pré, had already been installed as Governor of Fort St. George in the room of Laurence Palk. The Peace of Paris, in 1763, had restored Pondicherry to the French, who in their turn acknowledged our good friend Muhammad Alí as Nawáb of the Karnatic, while both nations accepted the fratricide Nizám Alí as *de facto* ruler of the Deccan. Thenceforth the Nawáb of the Karnatic reigned by sufferance of his English friends, who undertook the military defence of his kingdom, leaving him to mismanage its internal affairs. In 1765 an Imperial Farmán, obtained by Clive at Palk's request, invested the Company with sovereign rights over the Northern Circárs, and freed the ruler of the Karnatic from his old allegiance to the Nizám of Haidarábád. Thus, within five years from the fall of Pondicherry, the East India Company became in effect the dominant power along the eastern seaboard of Southern India, from *Orissa to* Cape Comorin.

The Nizám however had no mind to accept an arrangement which ignored his own claims over the ceded provinces. Alarmed by his threats of war, and painfully conscious of a drained exchequer, the Madras Council agreed to pay the Nizám tribute for the Circárs, and to aid him with their own troops in time of need. That time was fast approaching. Haidar Alí Khán was a Muhammadan soldier of fortune, whose strong will and dauntless courage, backed by a matchless turn for intrigue, had made him the foremost officer and at length the usurping ruler of the Hindu kingdom of Mysore, seated behind the woody ramparts of the Eastern Ghâts. For some years past he had been filling his treasury and enlarging his frontiers at the expense not only of the Malabar princes, but even of the Maráthás and the Nizám. At last his growing power provoked the Nizám to make war upon him in concert with the young Maráthá Peshwá, Madhu Ráo, whose famous father, Bálaji, had died heartbroken after the rout of Pánípat.

Early in 1767 a great Maráthá army invaded Mysore. Buying the invaders off with a large ransom, Haidar next persuaded Nizám Alí to join him in attacking the very force which had been despatched from Madras to the Nizám's aid. Colonel Smith, however, and his brave little army were equal to the need. Two great victories, won against enormous odds, cleared the Karnatic of all invaders, and drove the faithless Nizám Alí to sue for peace. The treaty which had just been so foully broken, Palk's Council

now renewed in effect with yet worse additions; for they bound themselves to fight for a twice perjured ally against the fierce, wily, resourceful Sultán of Mysore. The Company, in fact, were committed to a long and costly struggle with the stoutest, ablest, and most determined foe whom our arms had ever encountered in Southern India.

The Court of Directors cried aloud against the meddling policy of their servants at Madras. Once more they declared it none of their business to act as 'umpires of Indostan.' It was not for their interest that either the Nizám or Haidar should be crushed altogether, while the Maráthás, whom they dreaded more than Haidar, remained free to overrun India. All they cared for was to hold aloof from the quarrels of the 'country powers'; and very strong was the language in which they condemned the bargain just made with the Nizám for the possession of provinces still owned by the ruler of Mysore. And in the opulent fortunes lately amassed by their own servants they saw only fresh grounds for the popular belief that 'this rage for negotiations, treaties, and alliances, has private advantage for its object, more than the public good.'

Meanwhile the war against Haidar Naik, as his opponents scornfully styled him, raged for some months with varying fortune. His strong places on the Malabar coast were captured at one moment by a force sent from Bombay, only to be retaken at the next by Haidar's unstaying energy. On his eastern *frontier* Smith pressed him so hard that, before the

end of 1768, he made overtures for peace on terms which Palk's Council unwisely rejected. Then, turning fiercely on his assailants, whom Smith for a time had ceased to command, he drove them across the frontier and sent a cloud of horsemen to ravage the Karnatic.

Once more Smith pressed him back towards Chengalpat; but the daring freebooter had not yet played his last card. Drawing his opponent southward in slow pursuit, he left his infantry and guns in the hills near Pondicherry, and dashed off with six thousand of his best horsemen towards Madras. Before Smith could overtake him, the game had been won. From his camp on Mount St. Thomas, within sight of Madras itself, Haidar sent the Madras Council a message which declared his readiness to treat for peace. At his request Mr. Du Pré, 'who is a wise sirdar and one of the councillors,' came out to his camp for a friendly discussion. On the 3rd April, 1769, Haidar signed a treaty of his own dictating, which left him master of all his former conquests, and bound each party to help the other against all assailants. Want of money and the cowardice of their native allies were the chief excuses pleaded by Palk's Council for this lame, inglorious outcome of a war into which they had plunged so recklessly, with aims so far transcending their limited means.

If Haidar Alí set much store by the promises of his new allies, he was soon to reap a bitter disappointment.

In 1770 a great Maráthá army invaded Mysore, to

punish Haidar for withholding his promised tribute from the Peshwá of Poona. Against superior numbers and good leading all Haidar's strategy was of no avail; and nothing but the Maráthá greed for plunder saved his capital, Seringapatam, from certain capture. In his extremity Haidar appealed for help to the Madras Council. That help Du Pré and his colleagues felt bound to give. But Sir John Lindsay, who had come out as King George's Envoy to the Nawáb of the Karnatic, encouraged Muhammad Alí to take his own way in defiance of his English patrons; and the Nawáb resolved to gratify his hatred of Haidar by leaguing himself with Haidar's foes. On this point however the Nawáb gave way; but nothing could induce him to keep faith with the man he hated, and without his support Du Pré could do nothing for his sworn ally. Shut up in Seringapatam, without hope of aid from any quarter, the turbulent ruler of Mysore was driven at last to accept a peace which stripped him of nearly half his kingdom, and saddled his treasury with the payment of a heavy fine. He never forgave the English for what he considered a cowardly breach of faith.

As second in Council and member of a Select Committee for dealing with all the Company's affairs, Warren Hastings seems to have taken a moderating part in matters of foreign policy. His letters show how keenly he resented the interference of a King's Envoy at Arcot with the powers entrusted to the *Council of Fort* St. George. It was an evil day, he

thought, for his countrymen in India, when a King's minister came out to thwart the best efforts of the Company's officers, by sowing dissension between the Madras Council and the prince who owed everything to their support. It was true that Lindsay's successor, Sir Robert Harland, had been enjoined to act in all harmony with the Madras Government. But the post he held at the court of Muhammad Alí gave him an authority likely to clash with that of the Company, whose 'honour and importance' were ostensibly his chief concern. Hastings saw nothing but mischief in the 'unnatural powers' entrusted to Harland, 'powers given not to extend the British dominion, or increase the honour of the nation, but surreptitiously stolen out for the visible purpose of oppressing the King's subjects and weakening the hands by which his influence is sustained in India.' The Company's affairs would never prosper till the King's minister was recalled. 'His presence can do no good. He alienates the Nabob from the Company, and is the original cause of all the distress which you have suffered and are like to suffer in your finances.'

This was written to Sir George Colebrooke, then Chairman of the Court of Directors. As a loyal servant to his masters, Hastings pleaded that the recall of Harland was the only way to untie the hands of the Madras Government for administering the affairs of the Karnatic, and securing to the Company their proper share of any advantage gained by

their arms; 'at present the risk is almost wholly the Company's, and the fruits entirely the Nabob's.' To Sulivan, one of the Directors, he complains of the troubles brewed within Madras by the Nawáb's Scotch partisans, who 'inflame his jealousy of our government, feed his resentments with every rascally tale that the idle conversation of the settlement can furnish them with, and assist him in his literary polemics, for such his letters of the last two years may be truly called[1].'

In spite of these manifest grounds for just complaint, Hastings bore himself so discreetly throughout the Nawáb's controversies with Du Pré's Council, that, on the eve of his departure for Calcutta, he received a parting assurance of the Nawáb's good-will, gratitude, and entire satisfaction with 'every part' of Mr. Hastings' conduct in relation to himself. 'This,' wrote Hastings, 'was too honourable a testimony for me to receive with a safe conscience; but I can, with an unblemished one, affirm that I never opposed any interest to his but that of my employers.' It was this high devotion to his masters' service which guided and upheld the future Governor-General of India through the darkest and roughest passages of his stormy career.

While his mild influence lessened the friction of rival interests and authorities around Madras, Hastings busied himself to good effect with the special work assigned to his hands. By right of his place

[1] Gleig's *Warren Hastings*.

in Council he held the important post of Export Warehouse Keeper, the duties of which his predecessors had been wont to discharge by deputy. As a thing of course, the Company's investments in silk and cotton had been so carelessly overseen, that the roguery of native contractors had brought about a marked decline in the quality of the wares shipped off yearly for England. Hastings at once resolved to find some remedy for evils which threatened the very life of a most important trade.

It was no light task which he had undertaken; but his former experience in Bengal served him well. He began by repressing with a firm hand the extortions practised by native middle-men upon the poor weavers, who had been forced to work on terms that plunged them deeper and deeper into debt, and consequent suffering. They had sunk into a state of bondage as cruel as that of the Israelites in Egypt. Before Hastings left Madras, a steady improvement had taken place in the bales of silk and cotton prepared for the English markets. Hastings sent home to the Court of Directors a well-considered scheme for placing their investments at Madras on a sound commercial footing. In ready accordance with his advice, they resolved to entrust the duties of Export Warehouse Keeper to a separate officer of proved capacity, and to furnish him with a competent staff of trained clerks. This officer was empowered to displace the whole body of contractors and middle-men by agents of his own choosing, who

should deal directly with the head-men of the weaving villages, and pledge them in return for special advantages to make no contracts with private employers.

Hastings' services in this connexion hastened his removal from the 'Coast' Presidency to the scene of his future greatness. For some years past, ever since Clive's return to England, the Company's affairs in Bengal had been falling back into their old disorder under the weak rule of Verelst and Cartier. The rich provinces won by Clive's sword and further secured by his diplomacy had been left in the hands of native administrators, whose agents fleeced their own countrymen in the name of a pensioned sovereign living in idle state at Murshidábád. An army of Faujdárs, Amils, Sardárs, and such like gentry, preyed like parasites on the people and fattened on the revenues designed for the Company's use. The English 'supervisors,' appointed in 1769 to check these abuses and to look after the Company's interests, were, in Hastings' own words, 'the boys of the service,' who made themselves 'rulers, very heavy rulers, of the people.' Against the mischief caused by their ignorance or their greed, the Board of Revenue at Murshidábád was too weak, or too dishonest, to make much headway.

Within the Calcutta Council things were no better. Clive's reforms had fallen on barren soil. Every Councillor did that which seemed right in his own *eyes—from* the money-grabbing point of view. The

Company's servants traded, bargained, and took bribes as freely as they had done in the days of Vansittart. The golden age which Clive had promised after his return home was realised only by the gentlemen who were making their fortunes at the Company's expense, and by a number of native agents, officers, and landholders, who throve upon the jobbery and peculation that played havoc both with the trade and the revenues of Bengal.

In 1770, the year when Cartier succeeded Verelst, broke out the terrible famine which slew more than a third of the people in Bengal, and turned large tracts of fertile country into tiger-haunted jungle. Meanwhile, the Company itself was borrowing money for immediate needs, and was paying in other ways the full penalty of its transformation into a political power. Amidst seeming riches, so great was its actual poverty that the Directors asked for a loan from the British exchequer. The loan, which saved them from impending bankruptcy, was granted in 1772, only on condition that the Company should pay the nation £400,000 a year for the privilege of holding a few years longer the dominions won by treaty from the Emperor of Delhi. The spectacle of a merchant company wielding all the powers and patronage of sovereign rulers in the face of their own sovereign, George III, was an anomaly which no English statesman could readily brook; and the tide of popular feeling ran very strong against the whole class of '*Nabobs,*' who, laden with the spoils of Indian service,

were buying their way at all costs into the House of Commons, and eclipsing the ancient splendour of the highest and wealthiest county lords[1].

In view of the perils which encompassed them, the Court of Directors had turned their thoughts to Warren Hastings, as the one strong man whose high abilities, unblemished character, and undoubted zeal in his masters' service, might extricate their affairs in Bengal from the tangle of debt, mismanagement, anarchy, and wrong-doing in which they had become involved. Before the close of 1771, Hastings found himself appointed Second in Council at Fort William, with the right of succeeding Cartier in the government of that Presidency. In spite of some natural regrets at parting from his friends at Madras, and from colleagues with whom he had worked harmoniously for more than two years, he accepted this new mark of his employers' confidence with a pleasure heightened by his 'partial attachment to Bengal.' His fortune, as he wrote home to his friend Mrs. Hancock, was 'not worse' than it had been two years before; but he was 'not certain that it is better.' What other man of his standing in the Company's service could have said the same?

All his letters of this period bear telling witness to the writer's warm heart, his gentle, sensitive, kindly nature, his frank yet winning manners, his gratitude for kindness shown him, his loyalty to his colleagues,

[1] Gleig, Auber, Mill, Macaulay.

and his large share of the charity that thinketh no evil. In the letters to Mrs. Hancock and the Woodmans, he speaks no longer like a fine gentleman in full dress; but talks in pretty homely sentences that come straight from the heart.

On the 2nd February, 1772, Hastings sailed from Madras, and landed at Calcutta about the 20th. During that time he wrote those letters to Colebrooke and Sulivan, of which mention was briefly made in a former page. In the long letter to Laurence Sulivan he gives his opinions freely, in terms of studied deference, on the various topics which call for especial remark. While he is all for supplying the Accountant's Office with men from England, he questions the policy of sending out as secretaries to the local governments men who have had no local experience, and will probably take no interest in the Company's welfare; to say nothing of the slight thus offered to the just claims and aspirations of the Company's own servants. And he dwells with quiet force on the imperative need of 'making the rewards of the service generally more adequate to the duties of it,' in accordance with the principle already applied to his own department at Madras. His letter to Sir George Colebrooke strikes the key-note of his plans and purposes for the better government of Bengal. He will give his mind to 'the improvement of the Company's finances, so far as it can be effected without encroaching on their future income.' In view especially of the *sufferings* entailed by the recent famine, 'the

revenue will require much management and a very gentle hand;' and from what he hears, 'more is to be done by economy, than can possibly be effected by enlarging the collections.'

About this time Hastings received a letter of advice and congratulation from the friend to whose influence he owed, in part, his new appointment. In the spirit of a master writing to a former pupil, Lord Clive exhorted the new Governor to set the public interest above all private claims, to trust his own judgment rather than that of others, to plan carefully and act daringly in time of danger; 'never entertaining a thought of miscarrying till the misfortune actually happens,' and even then setting to work upon new schemes, 'with an opinion that time and perseverance will get the better of everything[1].'

[1] Malcolm's *Life of Clive*.

CHAPTER IV

The New Order in Bengal

1772–1774

It was not till the 13th April, 1772, that Cartier handed over to Hastings the keys of office, with the charge of a depleted treasury, a burdensome debt, and a government wholly out of gear. The new Governor's secret instructions from Leadenhall Street did not tend to lighten the heavy burden which Warren Hastings had to take upon his shoulders. He was bidden to carry out a multitude of needful reforms by means and agencies utterly inadequate to so Herculean a task. He was told to make strict enquiry into all the misdeeds alleged against the Company's servants of every grade, to punish proved offenders according to their deserts, to sweep away the monopolies that were killing the inland trade, to devise cheaper and surer modes of collecting the revenue, to re-organise the Nawáb's household, and bring to account the chief native officers in Bengal and Behar. All this, and much more, he was expected to do as President of a Council in which every man had an equal vote, while some at least of his colleagues were guilty of

the very malpractices which he had been directed to search out and punish.

By force of character, tact, courtesy, and a patience almost sublime, Hastings managed for two years to keep his Council fairly up to the mark of his own aims. For some weeks before he took his seat as President he had been hard at work, as he wrote to Du Pré, in 'reading, learning, but not inwardly digesting.' It was now his turn to act; but 'I have hopes'—he adds—'of *able* support and *willing*. I wish for no more.'

Within a fortnight, the new Governor had taken the first steps towards effecting a great revolution in the affairs of Bengal. Up to this time the internal government of the two provinces, Bengal and Behár —for Orissa was still held by the Maráthás—had remained for each in the hands of a Náib Diwán, or deputy-governor, who looked after all matters concerning the revenue, the police, the courts of justice, and the management of the Nawáb's household. Under the nominal control of the Company he had become, in Hastings' words, 'the Názim (or ruler) of the province, and in real authority more than the Názim.' Within Bengal itself these large powers had been entrusted by Clive to Muhammad Raza Khán, a Musalmán noble of approved loyalty and high repute. The outlying province of Behár was ruled in like manner by Rájá Shitáb Rái, the brave Hindu chief who had fought under the walls of Patná in the front *rank of Knox's* heroes.

In view of the evils growing out of an arrangement which tended to divorce the substance from the show of power, the Court of Directors had at last resolved to take the government of the country into their own hands. On the 24th April, Hastings received the letter in which they announced their intention to 'stand forth as Diwán,' and to entrust their own servants with 'the entire care and management of the revenues' of Bengal. Hastings was enjoined to remove Muhammad Raza Khán from office, and to bring him down to Calcutta to defend himself from certain charges of embezzlement and oppression into which enquiry must be made. Similar measures were to be taken against Shitáb Rái [1]. Before many days both these gentlemen had been escorted down to Calcutta, where they remained 'in an easy confinement' pending the issue of a trial conducted by the Governor himself. With the Council's sanction, Middleton was placed in charge of Muhammad Raza's post. Both the prisoners were assured by Hastings of the deep regret with which he obeyed the commands of his masters in England, and of his own desire to give them all facilities for their defence.

Meanwhile, matters of yet more pressing importance engaged his thoughts. For some years past the land revenue, the one great customary source of fiscal wealth in India, had yielded very little profit to the real masters of Bengal. Whoever gained by it, the Company were defrauded of their rightful share. The

[1] Auber.

bulk of it was drained off by a few native officers, a number of Zamíndárs, or revenue-farmers, and a swarm of greedy underlings, at the cost not only of the Company, but of millions of helpless rack-rented husbandmen. After the famine of 1770 the collecting of revenue in many districts seemed like trying to squeeze water out of a dry sponge.

For some weeks before Cartier's retirement, Hastings had attacked this burning question with his wonted energy and statesmanlike breadth of view. When the final orders from England reached him, a scheme for settling the land revenue on a sound footing for a term of years had already been laid before his Council, and a committee appointed to carry it out. In the heats of a Bengal June, the Committee, headed at first by Hastings himself, set forth on a round of investigation through all the districts of the province. During many weeks of wet, stormy, or sultry weather, they pursued their labours with much diligence and painstaking research. But it was soon discovered that the only way to get through a task so formidable with due despatch was to farm out the land revenue for five years by the short and simple process of public auction. The lands of Bengal were leased to the highest bidders among the Zamíndárs, or hereditary rent-collectors, whom Lord Cornwallis afterwards transformed into real landowners of the modern English type. Those Zamíndárs whose biddings fell below the mark were pensioned off, and their *lands put up to* sale.

'The farming system for a course of years, subjected to proper checks and regulations, seemed the most likely to afford relief to the country; and both to ascertain and produce the real value of the lands without violence to the ráyats.' So wrote Hastings to the Court of Directors; and such was the spirit in which his colleagues strove to reconcile the interests of the rulers with those of the ruled. The ráyats were relieved from many of the burdens under which they had long groaned. The rents of their holdings might no longer be enhanced at pleasure by the Zamíndár, nor certain fines and cesses be extorted from them by his agents and retainers. Some check was also placed on the power of the banyan, or village-usurer, to prey upon the peasantry at rates of interest ranging from three to twelve per cent. monthly. The Zamíndárs, in their turn, were secured by their leases from any increase of the Government charge; and the payment of that charge by *kists*, or instalments, was arranged for the most convenient seasons of the year. The offering of presents to the Company's servants, Zamíndárs, and native officers was strictly forbidden. No collector thenceforth might be concerned, directly or indirectly, in buying or selling grain. No European was allowed to hold lands in any part of the country; nor might any native in the collector's service rent a farm or go security for any farmer [1].

That the results of the Committee's labours were not wholly successful, takes nothing from the credit

[1] Auber.

due to them for good work done or attempted in the face of heavy drawbacks. If, in the next five years, the defaulting Zamíndárs might be counted by hundreds and the arrears of land revenue exceeded two millions, if the country still suffered from many forms of wrong-doing, it must be remembered that the Committee of Circuit were like explorers in unknown regions, who had no trustworthy guides to show them the right track; that they had to decide in haste on questions new to their experience; and that gentleman who might, in Kaye's words, be 'dead hands at investments,' would certainly take some wrong turns in their first attempts at practical statesmanship on a large scale.

The reforms thus set on foot involved others. English collectors replaced native *Amils* in the civil management of many districts, each as large as an average English shire. Over each group of districts or collectorates a commissioner was to act as general overseer. The Revenue Boards at Patná and Murshidábád were transferred as one board to Calcutta. The magisterial and judicial powers, hitherto wielded by native Diwáns, Faujdárs, and Zamíndárs, were largely curtailed by the creation in each district of a civil and a criminal court, over which the collector ruled supreme. In Calcutta itself, thenceforth the capital of Bengal, were established two Courts of Appeal for civil and criminal cases. Over the *Sadr Diwání Adálat*, or chief civil court, the Governor *himself with two* members of Council presided. The

Sadr Nizámat Adálat, or chief criminal court, was still entrusted to a Darogá, or native judge, appointed by the Governor in Council. In each Court the judges were aided by native assessors skilled in expounding the subtleties of Hindu and Muhammadan law. All these changes were begun or effected during the first year of Hastings' government.

Nor was this the whole record of work done in that period on behalf of the new policy ordained from England. As the titular Nawáb of Bengal had now ceased to reign, the office of Náib Súbah, or deputy-viceroy, was done away. The Nawáb's stipend was cut down by one half, to sixteen lakhs of rupees (£160,000) a year. The process of retrenchment was applied to the pension list and the expenses of the Nawáb's household. For guardian to the little prince who had lately succeeded to his father's titles, Hastings selected the Manni Begam, widow of the unfortunate Mír Jafar. To the office of Diwán, or controller of the household, he appointed Rájá Gurdás, son of his old enemy and future assailant, Mahárájá Nanda-Kumár, who had once held high office in Mír Jafar's government. From the time when he became Governor of Húglí under Súráj-ud-daulá to the year 1762, when Hastings helped to convict him of plotting against the Company, Nanda-Kumár's life had been one long intrigue. 'The man'—writes Hastings in 1772—'never was a favourite of mine, and was engaged in doing me many ill offices for seven years together.'

The misdeeds of that wily Bráhman, his plots, his

treasons, and his forgeries, were well known to the India House Board. But though his character was as bad as possible, his influence with his own countrymen and his power to help or harm the Company's interests were supposed to be very great. His known abilities might be turned to account in the prosecution of his hated rival, Raza Khán. The Directors had bidden Hastings make what use he could of the traitor's services in this connexion; and Hastings complied with the spirit of their injunctions by bestowing office on the son. Some of his colleagues at first opposed this measure as tantamount to appointing Nanda-Kumár himself. But the stress laid by their President on the Rájá's special usefulness for the work in hand turned their reluctance into assent[1].

In his measures for repressing corrupt and oppressive practices among the Company's servants, Hastings again obeyed the Court's injunctions in the spirit rather than the letter. The powers entrusted to him for this end could only serve, he wrote, 'to destroy every other that I am possessed of, by arming my hand against every man, and every man's against me.' Most of those who had conspired to set up monopolies of salt, tobacco, betel-nut, rice and other grains were found to be friends or relations to East India Directors. Hastings suppressed the traffic with

[1] See Forrest's *Selections from the Letters, Despatches, and other State-papers of the Government of India*, 3 vols. folio. Calcutta, 1890. A *work of the greatest* value for the whole term of Hastings' rule.

a firm but delicate hand, while the question of punishment was allowed to slide.

The improvement of the Company's trade was another object of Hastings' care. His letters of this period show his conversance with all kinds of practical details, his appetite for fresh knowledge, and the readiness with which he could turn aside from larger subjects to discuss some new method of preparing silk thread, or to give advice about the purchase of cocoons. His duties, in fact, were so multifarious that he might well complain to his friend Du Pré of 'a mind discomposed, and a temper almost fermented to vinegar by the weight of affairs to which the former is unequal, and by everlasting teasing.' Complainants from all quarters 'halloo'd' him for justice, whenever he looked out of window or took an airing. 'Nevertheless,' he writes, 'we go on, though slowly; and in the hopes of support at home, and of an easier time here when proper channels are cut for the affairs of the province to flow in, I persevere. Neither my health nor spirits, thank God, have yet forsaken me.' The support he hoped for was not withheld; and the good opinion of his friends in India was ratified by the terms in which the Secret Committee at home expressed their 'entire approbation,' and promised him their 'firmest support' in accomplishing what he had so successfully begun.

The year 1773 opened with the trial of Rájá Shitáb Rái before a Committee of which Hastings himself was president. The pressure of more important

business, and the Governor's politic desire to place the new rule on firm foundations, amply justified a delay which gave the prisoner more time to prepare his defence. From the first, Hastings felt convinced of the Rájá's innocence, and wondered why he had been brought to such account. Some months later, a full and honourable acquittal was followed by the Rájá's restoration to his former dignities under a new name. In August he set out for Patná as Deputy-governor of Behar. But his health was so broken that he survived the journey but a few weeks. Mill and Macaulay kill him of a broken heart; but this, as Horace Wilson rightly remarks, is quite a gratuitous supposition. It is just as likely that the climate of Calcutta disagreed with him. In acknowledgment of his former services and recent sufferings, his son was straightway installed by Hastings in the offices destined for the father.

The trial of Muhammad Raẓa Khán lingered on for a whole year. The charges against him were investigated day by day with unflagging patience; Hastings himself filling the twofold part of examiner and interpreter. The result of examining scores of witnesses and hundreds of documents deepened his old distrust of Nanda-Kumár and convinced him that, even if the accused were any way guilty, the time for proving him so had gone by. Nanda-Kumár's evidence broke down egregiously. The evil old Bráhman could only produce accounts that proved nothing, *and reiterate* charges which he always failed to make

good. At last the long enquiry ended in an acquittal, which the Court of Directors subsequently confirmed. The victim of their rashness and Nanda-Kumár's hate was restored ere long to much of his former eminence. More fortunate than his fellow-sufferer, he lived to hold high office under the Government of Bengal, and to see his old traducer doomed to a felon's death.

Some further changes in the machinery of government were soon to occupy Hastings' attention. The new class of English collectors were found unequal to their new duties; and in 1774 their powers were transferred to native Diwáns and Amils, controlled in fiscal matters by a Committee of Revenue, which sat daily in Calcutta to hear complaints from ráyats and other aggrieved persons. The collectorates were grouped into six divisions, each administered by a Provincial Council of five, whose duties ranged from the hearing of appeals in civil suits to a careful enquiry into land tenures and a general supervision of revenue accounts. A few gentlemen, the pick of the Company's service, were sent on a roving commission to visit 'such districts as might require a local investigation[1].'

Hastings had given Bengal a judicial system which, however rude and imperfect, aimed at dealing equal justice on fixed principles to all alike. This boon he determined to better by drawing up a code of Hindu and Muhammadan law for the guidance of the new

[1] Auber.

courts. One part of the task was comparatively easy, for a good, if lengthy, digest of Muhammadan law had been made by command of Aurangzeb. But the Hindu laws, which concerned two-thirds of the people, were buried in a multitude of books written in a tongue which very few Hindus could understand. Ten of the most learned Pandits in the country came down to Calcutta at Hastings' special desire, to compile an authoritative digest of Hindu laws. Translated into Persian from the Sanskrit originals, the new code enabled the courts to decide all cases with certainty and despatch. Mr. Halhed, of the Company's service, then set to work upon an English translation, which was completed early in 1775. While it was still in progress, Hastings sent the first two chapters to his old school-fellow, the great Lord Mansfield, 'as a proof that the inhabitants of this land are not in the savage state in which they have been unfairly represented.'

Meanwhile, Hastings' Government had been engaged in remodelling the police of Calcutta, and had dealt some vigorous blows against the more rampant forms of lawless violence in Bengal. Gangs of Dakáits, or bandits, had all through the century been driving a brisk trade in rapine and murder among the feeble folk of a country in which law and order had become words of little meaning. 'They are robbers by profession, and even by birth,' wrote the Committee of Circuit in 1772; 'they are formed into regular communities, and their families subsist by the spoils

which they bring home to them.' Most of them, in fact, were members of a great robber caste bound together by hereditary ties, by the use of a secret language and secret signs, and, like the Thags of a later day, by the common observance of religious rites. They looked like travellers or pilgrims, whose only weapons were long walking-sticks, that served as handles for the spear-heads hidden about their dress. As their attacks were made by night in gangs of thirty or forty, the startled villagers had no time for resistance. From the banker to the peasant, all were plundered without mercy, and those were fortunate who escaped with their lives. A portion of the booty was set aside for the Zamíndár with whose connivance the robbery had taken place. The village headman and the Thánádár, or chief constable, were usually bribed to silence by a share of the spoils [1].

Hastings set himself to repress these outrages with a strong hand. He decreed, with the sanction of his colleagues, that every convicted Dakáit should be hanged in his own village; that the village itself should be heavily fined; and that all his family should 'become the slaves of the State, and be disposed of for the general benefit and convenience of the people, according to the discretion of the Government.' Faujdárs, or chief officers of police, were placed in every district to protect the peaceful villagers, and to take all due measures for tracking out and capturing Dakáits. And they were further

[1] *Auber, Kaye's Administration of the East India Company.*

empowered to demand help from landholders and revenue officers in the discharge of their special duties.

Hastings, indeed, was for holding the Zamíndárs themselves accountable for all gang-robberies on their estates. The fact of their complicity was afterwards proved on the clearest evidence. But his proposals on this point were set aside by the votes of an adverse majority in Council. His letters show how keenly he regretted the lack of all power to overrule his colleagues for the public good. It speaks loudly for his personal influence that he carried his Council with him on most of the questions debated in the first three years of his rule. But on this occasion his opponents were not to be talked over, and the plague which he would have stamped out by timely rigour lived on to vex the greatest of his successors, Dalhousie himself.

Besides the endemic plague of Dakáiti, and other forms of social disorder, Bengal suffered from epidemics of outrage caused by yearly irruptions of Sanyási bandits, as Hastings termed them, from somewhere beyond the Brahmaputra. These naked wandering Fakírs roved in large bands across the country on yearly pilgrimage to the shrine of Jagannáth, 'recruiting their numbers with the healthiest children they can steal,' and plundering the people right and left under religious pretexts. In 1773, a large body of these ruffians, on their march through Rangpur, nearly *cut to pieces two* small parties of Pargana Sepoys, led

by English officers. Several battalions of regular Sepoys had to be employed in hunting them out of Bengal, and troops were afterwards posted along the frontier to prevent all future raids[1].

At the same time, other troops were waging a harder fight against the Bhutia invaders of Kúch-Behar, whose young Rájá in 1772 had appealed to Hastings for help in driving them back to their own hills. In return for such help, he offered to acknowledge the Company's over-lordship, and to assign half his revenues to the Government of Bengal. His prayer was granted, and a small Sepoy force hastened to his aid. The men of Bhután fought stubbornly, but Sepoy discipline under British leading bore them back into their own mountains; and in 1774 their leader, the Deb Rájá, was glad to make peace on terms which restored to him his captured strongholds and gave Bhutia merchants the right of trading with Rangpur.

Out of this campaign sprang Hastings' project of sending a British mission into Tibet. The Teshu Láma, one of the two rival Buddhist Popes who reigned in that far corner of the Chinese Empire, had written to Hastings pleading for the merciful treatment of his unruly vassal, the Deb Rájá. His request was answered by the treaty of 1774, which Hastings followed up by sending George Bogle, a young civil officer of fine promise, on a friendly mission to the Láma himself. This measure, he fondly hoped, might prove the preface to a new and profitable trade between

[1] Gleig.

Tibet and India. Bogle set out in May, 1774, on his strange journey into unknown regions, laden with presents and samples of Indian goods, and charged to make diligent use of his opportunities for gaining all kinds of information by the way. A medical officer named Hamilton bore him company. At Tassisudon, the capital of Bhután, they were kindly received by the new Deb Rájá, who had replaced the invader of Kúch-Behar. At Desherigpay, in the mountain land of Tibet, they found a warm welcome from the Teshu Láma himself, in whose train they recrossed the Tsánpu, or Upper Brahmaputra, and entered the Láma's palace at Teshu-Lumbo. He would have sent them on to Lhása, the Grand Láma's own capital, had not the Regent's orders barred their advance. In June, 1775, Bogle found himself once more in Calcutta, where Hastings received him with open arms[1].

So far as trade with Tibet was concerned, nothing but friendly messages and some choice specimens of the products of the country came of an enterprise from which Warren Hastings had hoped so much. Bogle's valuable letters and journals remained in manuscript for a hundred years. His good friend, the Teshu Láma, died in 1780 at Peking, before he had won permission from his Chinese over-lord to open Tibet to foreign trade. Bogle's early death in the following year was another blow to his patron's hopes and purposes. Meanwhile, the friendly intercourse with

[1] *Bogle*, Auber, Clements Markham's Narrative.

Bhután had been strengthened by the maintenance of a yearly fair at Rangpur, and by two missions which Bogle's comrade, Dr. Hamilton, led within three years to the Deb Rájá's capital. At last, in 1783, a second embassy to the Teshu Láma made its way under Captain Turner to the point which Bogle had once reached. In March of the following year, Turner reported himself to Hastings at Patná. But the great Governor's career in India was fast nearing its close; and the fruits of his wise policy finally disappeared when Gúrkha ambition forced the Chinese to block all the passes leading into Tibet[1].

Before the cold season of 1774, Hastings had wrought a marvellous change in what seemed to him at the outset 'a confused heap of indigested materials, as wild as the chaos itself.' If his efforts to improve the Company's revenues had borne but little apparent fruit, he had striven hard at any rate to keep down the public debt, to encourage thrift in every department, and to increase the balances in the Calcutta Treasury. He had made his influence felt for good in all branches of administrative work. The trade of the country had been stimulated by the removal of many local imposts and by the adoption of a low uniform customs duty. The village weavers, rescued from bondage to grinding task-masters, were set free to make their own bargains with the Company's agents for the produce of their looms. The manufacture of salt and opium was brought

[1] Markham.

under Government control, to become the source of a steadily growing revenue. A bank was opened in Calcutta under Hastings' auspices, and he took special credit to himself for abolishing all duties and fees on marriage. In short, within the limits prescribed by his masters, who still shirked a part of their political duty, and with official powers inadequate to the task assigned him, he had succeeded in planning out and laying sure foundations of civilised rule over the provinces won by the sword and diplomacy of Clive.

To have accomplished so much in two years and a half, amid the drawbacks of a depressing climate, of a Council unwieldy in numbers and tenacious of their rights, of subalterns unused to regular control, of private interests, claims, and jealousies which clashed with the public good, and of orders from the India House which sometimes marred or hindered the success of his own measures, while grave questions of foreign policy called for timely deliberation, was a feat of constructive skill and patient pilotage which alone entitles Hastings to rank among statesmen of the highest order. By breaking up his Council into committees and replacing boards with individuals, he got much of his work done better, more quickly, and with less friction, than ever before. Intellectually a head and shoulders taller than any of his colleagues, he never wounded their pride by assuming airs of superiority, but strove to win their support by force of patient reasoning and steady conciliation. Sometimes indeed, by his own confession, he was 'obliged

to make sacrifices' which his mature judgment disapproved. Barwell, who afterwards became his staunch ally, was at first a rather ungracious opponent. The most troublesome of his colleagues was Sir Robert Barker, who then commanded the Bengal army. The Governor's zeal for retrenchment drew him into 'a violent squabble' with that brave but hot-tempered officer over the disbanding of a few hundred native horse. The violence was all on one side. Sir Robert's angry outburst against economies which he detested was met by Hastings with a courteous answer regretting the strong language of the General's protest, and pleading his earnest desire to 'live in peace with all men.'

With one or two exceptions, however, Hastings had his Council well in hand before the middle of 1773. 'After various contests, disputes, protests, and an almost open rupture'—he writes to his friend Du Pré—'a perfect harmony and confidence have taken place amongst us. . . . I am assured of a most cordial support from my associates, and can venture to delegate a share of my labours, which I have hitherto undertaken alone, to others, without the same hazard of sacrificing my own authority[1].' As the Council at this time consisted of eleven or twelve members, his masterful patience must have served him even better than his practical knowledge, cool judgment, and clear head.

[1] Gleig.

CHAPTER V

The Rohillá War

1772–1774

In the midst of his peaceful labours, Hastings kept from the first a careful watch over the course of affairs outside the Bengal frontiers. From the first, he saw signs of manifest danger to the peace of his own provinces in the disorders that seethed around them. The restless Maráthás were fast recovering the ground they had lost in the rout of Pánípat. In 1769 the Peshwá, Mádhu Ráo, had sent forth a mighty army to harry the people and despoil the princes of Northern India. After levying blackmail on the Ját and Rájput States, these locusts swarmed through Rohilkhand, threatened Oudh, and driving the Mughal troops before them entered Delhi itself in the winter of 1770. Masters once more of the Imperial city, they invited Sháh Alam thither from his temporary capital of Allahábád. In spite of earnest remonstrances from Calcutta, the weak but ambitious son of the murdered Alamgír eagerly caught at the prospect of revisiting as *Emperor the* home whence he had fled for his life in

1757. Before the close of 1771, Sháh Alam re-entered Delhi under a strong escort of Sindhia's horsemen, and let himself be installed on the throne of Akbar by the men whose fathers had so rudely shaken the empire of Aurangzeb.

For seven or eight years past the famous old city on the Jumna, with the surrounding districts, had been ably governed in the Emperor's name, first by the Rohillá chief, Najíb-ud-daulá, and after his death in 1770 by his son, Zábita Khán. They belonged to that race of Pathán mountaineers which has given the name of Rohilkhand to the old Hindu province of Kather, stretching from the Upper Ganges north-east to the Himálayas. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the rich well-watered plains of Rohilkhand were parcelled out among a group of kindred chieftains, who turned their arms against each other when they were not engaged in fighting the Maráthás or the Nawáb-Wazír of Oudh. In times of special danger they rallied round their *Háfiz* or Protector, Ráhmat Khán, the oldest and trustiest member of the clan.

One of these crises happened in 1772, when the Maráthás once more ravaged Rohilkhand. The Rohillá chiefs turned for help to Shujá-ud-daulá, the son of their old foe, Safdar Jang. The crafty Wazír of Oudh agreed to help them in driving out the Maráthás, if Ráhmat Khán would give him a bond for forty lakhs of rupees. The bond was given in accordance with a treaty signed in July, 1772, by both parties in the presence of Sir Robert Barker. In May

of the following year, the Maráthás fell back across the Ganges before a combined movement of troops from Oudh and Bengal [1]. A few months later the bulk of the Peshwá's army was marching southwards across the Narbadá, laden with the plunder of many provinces, to prepare for new enterprises nearer home.

Meanwhile, the luckless Emperor Sháh Alam had realised the full meaning of those friendly offers which had lured him back to the Palace of the Mughals. He found himself a mere State-dummy in the hands of his new patron, Madhaji Sindhia, who made use of the imperial name to cover his own schemes for retrieving the losses of Pánipat. After a campaign in which he had taken part, his new allies kept for themselves the booty they had promised to share with him. They fomented disturbances around Delhi, and attacked the forces which he sent to put them down. His best general, Mirza Najaf Khán, was beaten back by the hosts of Tukaji Holkar, and before the year's end Delhi opened its gates to the Maráthá conquerors. The helpless monarch had to disown his brave defender, and to make over into Maráthá keeping those very provinces of Kora and Allahábád which Clive had restored to him in 1765.

All this happened in 1772. It was clearly impossible for the English masters of Bengal to let these provinces, which linked Behar with Oudh, pass into the hands of their most formidable foes. By Hastings' order, both of them were straightway

[1] Keene's *Fall of the Moghul Empire*.

garrisoned with British troops. On that point the Governor and his Council were speedily of one mind. To keep the ravening Maráthá hordes out of the country lying between Etáwah and Allahábád, was a clear necessity alike for the masters of Bengal and their ally the Nawáb-Wazír. The Governor, for his part, made light of any immediate danger. The new Peshwá Náráyan Ráo was a youth of nineteen, and the Maráthás were 'sick of a long campaign.' But Hastings' colleagues voted for prompt action, and he admitted frankly, if not without regret, the need for such a course.

A civil officer was sent to administer the two provinces in the Company's name, pending the question of their future disposal. Hastings knew that the Company were strongly set against any enlargement of their dominions. He was willing to hold Kora and Allahábád in trust for Sháh Alam, if that prince would only have agreed to follow his advice. But the Emperor would agree to nothing until his arrears of tribute for Bengal were duly paid. To all such demands the Governor and his colleagues turned a deaf ear. Before the famine of 1769–70 Bengal had been drained of specie in order that the tribute might be regularly paid. Since then, chiefly in consequence of the famine, no payments had been made. And meanwhile the Emperor had not kept faith with his English friends. He had not only flung himself into the hands of their worst enemies; he had even intrigued against the Bengal Government by sending Major

John Morrison as his envoy to England, to treat for the transfer of Bengal from the Company to the Crown. To pay Sháh Alam any part of his tribute would be tantamount to enriching the Maráthás, whose tool and accomplice he had now become. 'His desertion of us, and union with our enemies,' wrote Hastings to Sulivan, 'leave us without a pretence to throw away more of the Company's property upon him, especially while the claims of our Sovereign are withheld for it.' To prevent all further misunderstanding, Hastings informed Sháh Alam that he must look for no more tribute from Bengal. This step was heartily applauded by the Court of Directors, who had themselves suggested it, some years before, as a proper penalty for any attempt on the Emperor's part to 'fling himself into the hands of the Maráthás, or any other power.'

Hastings owns that this transaction was regarded 'in the most criminal light' by many persons both in India and at home. But the blame, if any, rests chiefly with the Court of Directors, as Mill himself, no friend of Hastings, has pointed out. It must moreover be borne in mind that the Emperor's own conduct had given Hastings ample grounds for withholding the tribute promised by the treaty of 1765. Hastings had good cause for looking on Sháh Alam as a willing and dangerous tool in the hands of his new patrons. In surrendering to these the provinces which Clive's bounty had bestowed upon him, the Emperor himself had virtually annulled the contract

which entitled him to receive the tribute. Acting with common prudence on grounds of public policy, Hastings refused to fulfil his share of a compact already broken by his former ally[1]. Any other statesman in his place would almost certainly have done the same thing.

As the Emperor had steadily refused to regain possession of his lost provinces by renouncing his claim to the forfeit tribute, Hastings resolved to make them over on certain conditions to his neighbour and ally, the Nawáb-Wazír, who had shown himself a strong ruler and a serviceable friend to the power he had once so recklessly defied. Shujá had reasons of his own for seeking help from his English allies. The money which he claimed from Ráhmat Khán was not forthcoming. On one plea and another, the Rohillá leader evaded the claim[2]. Forgetful of the shelter afforded him by Ráhmat's countrymen after the rout of Baxár, the crafty Wazír caught at so opportune a pretext for carrying out his father's schemes against Rohilkhand. He had already persuaded Sháh Alam to invest him with the office of Protector, in the room of Ráhmat Khán. It only remained for him to secure the countenance, if not the direct support, of his English neighbours.

In answer to his proposals, made in the early part of 1773, Hastings, with the full consent of his Council, agreed to hold a conference with the Wazír. Their first meeting took place in August at Benares, and

[1] Forrest's *Selections*.

[2] 'He added some barefaced lying to his evasions.'—Forrest.

the conference lasted off and on for about a fortnight. So private were the interviews, that Sir R. Barker made a special grievance of his exclusion therefrom[1]. By a covenant signed on the 7th September, the districts of Kora and Allahábád were made over to the Wazír for a sum of fifty lakhs—then worth more than half a million—payable, part down, the rest within two years. The services, whenever needful, of a British brigade were hired out to Shujá at a fixed monthly charge, with a promise of forty lakhs for the Company at the close of the projected campaign[2].

Hastings' fear of the Maráthás, who would certainly renew their raids on the first opportunity, his deep distrust of Sháh Alam, his belief in Shujá's usefulness to British interests, and his zeal for recruiting the Company's finances, all conspired to lead him in the direction pointed out by his able but unscrupulous ally. In the middle of September he set off again for Calcutta, with the Treaty of Benares in his pocket. Of the twelve members of Council Sir R. Barker alone found any fault with the treaty. When he argued that the Emperor could transfer to other hands the powers which in 1765 he had bestowed upon the Company, Hastings boldly declared that the Company's rule rested on no *Sanads* issued by the Mughal. 'The sword which gave us the dominion of Bengal must be the instrument of its preservation; and if (which God forbid) it shall ever cease to be ours, the

[1] *Malleson, Forrest.* [2] Auber, Mill, Malleson.

next proprietor will derive his rights of possession from the same natural charter[1].'

This was the plain English of our position in India. It may have suited the views of Clive and the Directors to obtain from a titular King of Delhi a formal grant of provinces already won by the valour of their troops. The same show of respect for legal sanctions marked the Company's later policy down to the catastrophe of 1857. But the fact remains that even at this moment our rule in India rests ultimately, as it did at first, upon the sword; and Hastings' plain speaking blew aside the legal cobwebs which had begun to overlie the fact. Dealing with the case before him as a statesman bound to do the best he could for his employers, he saw the advantage of strengthening his one sure ally by an arrangement which would replenish the Company's coffers, while it reared a new bulwark against Maráthá aggression. He held that Rohilkhand was to Oudh, both geographically and politically, what Scotland had been to England before the days of Elizabeth. The Rohillá lords he regarded as a weak but troublesome race of adventurers, who had no special right to continue governing a country which they had proved so powerless to defend. It seemed to him, therefore, a thing of course that the task of guarding the line of the Upper Ganges should be entrusted to more capable hands.

One leading clue to Hastings' policy may be found in that want of money which continued to vex the

[1] Auber.

masters of Bengal. He owned himself doubtful of the judgment that might be passed upon his acts at home, where he saw 'too much stress laid upon general maxims, and too little attention paid to the circumstances which require an exception to be made from them.' But he took comfort in thinking of 'the accidental concourse of circumstances,' that enabled him to 'relieve the Company in the distress of their affairs' by means which appeared to him entirely harmless. 'Such'—he writes to Sulivan—'was my idea of the Company's distress at home, added to my knowledge of their wants abroad, that I should have been glad of any occasion to employ their forces, which saves so much of their pay and expenses[1].'

Fear of the Maráthás was another and yet more powerful motive for a course of action which has since been often denounced, by none more eloquently than Macaulay himself, as a wanton aggression upon the innocent rulers of a well-governed and prosperous land. Hastings had followed with anxious eyes the gradual resurrection of the Maráthá power from the bloody field of Pánípat; and his sojourn at Madras had given him a strong foretaste of the mischief which Maráthá greed, cunning, and ambition might work among the distracted communities of Northern India. If the countrymen of Sivají once gained a permanent footing in Rohilkhand, Oudh itself would soon be at their mercy, and the English might have to fight a desperate struggle for Bengal. The innocence

[1] Gleig.

of the Rohillá chiefs had just displayed itself in negotiations with Sindhia and Holkar for objects dangerous to the peace of Oudh. Instead of paying their debt to Shujá, they were planning a raid across the Ganges into the country about Cawnpur. Instead of thriving in almost Arcadian bliss, the people of Rohilkhand were a rack-rented peasantry, living amid scenes of lawless strife, doomed to suffer alike from the exactions of their own masters and from the merciless raids of ubiquitous Maráthás[1]. There was disunion too among the Rohillá leaders, some of whom sided with the Wazír of Oudh, while others stood neutral, or very unwillingly espoused the cause of Ráhmat Khán.

Hastings himself avowedly based his Rohillá policy on high political grounds. He had 'long considered the power of the Rohillás as dangerous to that of the Wazír, the only useful ally of the Company.' A jealous dread of this powerful neighbour would drive the Rohillás at any moment to join the Maráthás in warring on the Wazír. The consequent danger to Oudh and Bengal could be averted only by the conquest of Rohilkhand. Our ally—he argues in the same Minute—would thus obtain 'a complete, compact state shut in effectually from foreign invasion by the Ganges, all the way from the frontiers of Behár to the mountains of Tibet, while he would remain equally accessible to our forces . . . either for hostilities or protection. It would give him wealth, of which we

[1] Hamilton's *History of the Rohillás*.

should partake, and give him security without any dangerous increase of power.' The bringing of the Wazír's frontiers nearer to the Maráthás would certainly 'render him more dependent on us, and cement the union more firmly between us[1].'

The moment chosen by the Wazír for entering on the conquest of Rohilkhand was opportune. No great Maráthá force was present in the Gangetic Doáb to hinder his preliminary movements across the Ganges in the last weeks of 1773. Sháh Alam had confirmed the grant of Allahábád and Kora to the Wazír, and even ordered a body of his Mughal troops to aid that prince in his campaign against the Rohillás[2]. In March, 1774, Colonel Champion's brigade crossed the Karamnása at Shujá's request, and in April the allied forces entered Rohilkhand. In accordance with the Treaty of Benares, Hastings had already deputed Middleton as political agent to Lucknow. On the 23rd April, 40,000 Rohillás were routed near Katra with heavy slaughter by Champion's disciplined troops. Charge after charge was broken by the fire from his well-served guns, and the enemy turned in swift flight before the bayonets of his advancing infantry, most of whom were Sepoys. Ráhmat Khán himself was among the slain. When the fight was fairly over, Shujá, who had been looking on from a safe distance, let his own soldiers loose for the work of pillage, which they achieved in a style that provoked loud murmurs from their disgusted allies. 'We have the

[1] *Forrest's Selections.* [2] Keene.

honour of the day'—exclaimed the latter—'and these banditti the profit.'

If Shujá-ud-daulá left his brave allies to do all the fighting, he did not forget to reward them with a liberal share of his gains. At the end of the campaign, which lingered fitfully to the close of the year, Champion's brigade received a donation of ten lakhs and a half, then equivalent to £130,000; a very fair allowance for so small a force[1].

Faiz-ullá Khán, who had unwillingly taken part in the war, withdrew the wrecks of the Rohillá army towards the Hills. It was not till August that Champion's brigade was called upon to complete its work. But the Rohillás were in no mood for further resistance. The Wazír had already offered them terms of peace. As their stores of food were running short, while Champion was nearing the mountains within which they had taken shelter, those terms were at last accepted by Faiz-ullá Khán, who, on payment of a heavy fine, was allowed to retain his father's fief of Rámpur. His followers, to the number of 18,000, were permitted or compelled to migrate across the Ganges into the districts around Meerut, which had been granted to the Rohillá, Zabita Khán, as a reward for his adherence to the Oudh Wazír[2].

That the conquest of Rohilkhand was stained by some of the cruelty and injustice so common in Eastern warfare, may be granted as a thing of course.

[1] Stubbs' *History of the Bengal Artillery*. [2] Keene, Auber.

But the tale of horror which Macaulay, following Burke, has stamped deep into the popular mind, differs widely from recorded facts. Some villages may have been plundered and burned, some blood shed in pure wantonness, some tracts of country laid waste. Shujá-ud-daulá was neither worse nor better than the average of Eastern rulers; nor was there much to choose between his soldiers and Háfiz Ráhmat's. It is folly to suppose that the new master of Rohilkhand would turn a rich province into a desert, or exterminate the very people to whose industry he would look for increased revenues. At one elbow he had Colonel Champion, at the other Hastings' own agent, Middleton; both empowered to remonstrate freely, and the latter even to use threats, on behalf of humanity and fair-play. Champion was a good officer, whose feelings often blinded his judgment; and his jealousy of Middleton sharpened his readiness to believe all stories told against the Wazír. The complaints he forwarded to Calcutta were often at variance with the reports which Hastings received from Middleton. Hastings could only remind the Colonel that he had various means of inclining the Wazír to the side of mercy, if he chose to employ them.

The honour of the British name, as Hastings afterwards pleaded, was left in Champion's keeping, and if that honour was tarnished, Champion alone could be held to blame[1]. In his letters to Middleton, the

[1] Forrest.

Governor enjoins him to use all his influence on behalf of Ráhmat's family, to remonstrate with the Wazír against every act of cruelty or wanton violence to his new subjects, to impress him with the English abhorrence of 'every species of inhumanity and oppression,' and, in the last resort, to work upon his fears of losing the countenance of his English allies[1].

In spreading slanders against the Wazír, Champion seemed to forget the part which he himself had played in the campaign of 1764, when, by his own showing, he helped to destroy 'upwards of 1000 villages' in Shujá's territory. But for the June rains, he wrote complacently to Vansittart, 'we should have done very considerable more damage.' Champion in fact was enraged with Hastings, who had refused not only to grant him unlimited control over the Government of Oudh, but even to let his soldiers share in the plunder of Rohilkhand. His own evidence, as recorded a year later, recanted or toned down many of his former imputations. The evidence of other officers and a careful study of the contemporary records now fully published for the first time in Mr. Forrest's three valuable Folios, leave no ground for rational belief in the legend elaborated by Burke and Macaulay out of the reckless slanders which Champion fathered, and which Francis spread abroad[2].

Few men of equal mark have suffered so cruelly as Warren Hastings from the malice of personal ene-

[1] Gleig, Forrest. [2] Forrest.

mies, the wild onslaughts of party orators and writers, and the misconceptions of one-sided critics. One pamphleteer of his day coolly affirmed that 500,000 Rohillá families were driven across the Jumna, and that Rohilkhand had become a barren and unpeopled waste. Mill himself asserts that 'every one who bore the name of Rohillá was either butchered or found his safety in flight and in exile.' And Macaulay, improving on Champion, tells how 'more than a hundred thousand people fled from their homes to pestilential jungles,' away from the tyranny of him to whom a Christian Government had 'sold their substance and their blood, and the honour of their wives and daughters;' Hastings looking on with folded arms 'while their villages were burned, their children butchered, and their women violated.' The truth, as we have seen, was widely different. The 'extermination' of the Rohillás—a word no longer used in its original sense—meant only the expulsion of a few Pathán chiefs with 18,000 of their people from the lands which they or their immediate predecessors had won by the sword. Some thousands of these Patháns stayed behind with Faiz-ullá Khán and other chiefs of the same stock. Behind also remained nearly a million Hindu husbandmen, who, says Hamilton, were 'in no way affected' by the change of masters, but who would certainly have starved if the whole country had been laid waste. Instead of looking carelessly on at scenes of untold outrage, Hastings *did his best* to stay the hand of a conqueror whose

indifference to the sufferings of others was tempered by a keen regard for his own interests [1].

Much blame has been cast upon Hastings for the part taken by British troops in such a war. In the letter confirming the Treaty of Benares, the Directors certainly demurred to the employment of their soldiers in a war waged between foreign potentates. But their censure rested on grounds of policy alone, of the policy which had led them so often to arraign the warlike proceedings of their servants in Southern India. It is obviously unfair to judge the statesmen of the days of George III by the ethical standards of our own time. The moral sense of Hastings' contemporaries did not restrain them from employing Red Indians against their own countrymen in North America. Three years after the Rohillá War an English peer declared in the House of Lords, with reference to this very practice, that 'we were justified in using all the means which God and nature had put into our hands;' and Lord Chatham stood nearly alone in denouncing the use made of 'those horrible hell-hounds of savage war [2].' The great bulk of Champion's force were Sepoys of the same race with those who fought for the Nawáb-Wazír. The latter were no more savages than the Rohillá Patháns; and their excesses were grossly exaggerated by Champion and his friends.

It has been urged by a recent writer of no

[1] Wilson's edition of Mill, Keene, Hamilton, Gleig.

[2] Brougham's *Statesmen of George III.*

small repute that the attack on the Rohillás was 'wrong in principle, for they had not provoked us[1].' But of two evils, Hastings chose the lesser. If the Rohillás had not directly provoked him, their intrigues with the Maráthás were a standing danger to Bengal and Oudh. It was better, he thought, to join in crushing them than to run the risk of being crushed himself. A strong political necessity drove him in self-defence into a line of action similar to that which English statesmen at home afterwards pursued towards Denmark, on two memorable occasions during the war with Napoleon Buonaparte. Hastings, moreover, felt bound in common justice to fight for an ally whose good-will had been proved by his recent conduct, and whose claims against Ráhmat Khán were founded on the treaty which an English general had personally helped to promote. In their despatch to the Directors, Hastings' Council laid particular stress upon 'the honour of the Company, pledged implicitly by General Barker's attestation for the accomplishment of this treaty, and which, added to their alliance with the Vizier, engaged us to see redress obtained for the perfidy of the Rohillás.' Were their persistent breach of faith to our ally, and their negotiations with the common enemy—the Maráthás—no provocations to the part which Hastings played in the ensuing war?

[1] Sir A. Lyall's *Warren Hastings*.

CHAPTER VI

The Regulating Act

1773–1775

In the very first year of Hastings' Government the Company's affairs were rigidly overhauled by Parliamentary Committees, whose enquiries resulted in Lord North's Regulating Act of 1773. Up to that time, as Hastings wrote to the Court of Directors, 'our constitution is nowhere to be traced but in ancient charters, which were framed for the jurisdiction of your trading settlements, the rates of your exports, and the provision of your annual investment.' No wonder that these proved wholly unfitted for 'the government of a great kingdom, and for the preservation of its riches from private violence and embezzlement.' The new Act was the first serious attempt made by the British Legislature to set up in India a form of government suitable to the changed conditions of the Company's official work.

The new Act ordained that each Director should hold office for four years, instead of one. The qualification for a vote in the Court of Proprietors was raised from £500 to £1000. No Proprietor might

claim more than four votes. The Governor of Bengal was transformed into a Governor-General; his Council was reduced to four members; and under their joint control were placed the Governments of Madras and Bombay. The Governor-General's salary was fixed at £25,000, that of each Councillor at £10,000 a year. A Supreme Court of Judicature, consisting of a Chief Justice and three puisne judges, was to administer English law from Calcutta for all British subjects in the provinces ruled by the Governor-General. Copies of all civil and military despatches received at the India House were to be forwarded within a fortnight to certain members of the Ministry, for their information if they chose to read them, but not for their final orders thereon. The Company were secured in all their commercial privileges, including the trade in salt, betel-nut, and tobacco. As a mark of public confidence, Hastings was appointed Governor-General. The clamours of the India House against these new curtailments of their chartered rights were presently allayed by a loan of £1,400,000 from the national exchequer.

Of the new Councillors, one only, Richard Barwell, had belonged to Hastings' old Council. The other three, General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Philip Francis, were selected in England by Lord North's Ministry for the manifest purpose of moulding the policy of the Indian Government in accordance with the views of Parliament and the Crown. Even if Barwell were to follow Hastings' lead, the nominees of

the Ministry might safely be trusted to get the upper hand in a governing body where each member would have an equal vote. For the vice of the old system re-appeared in the new; and the first Governor-General of British India found his hands tied yet more effectively than the erewhile Governor of Bengal. The new Councillors were formally enjoined to cultivate all good-will and harmony in the discharge of their appointed duties. But the sequel was soon to show what sort of value they attached to a form of words so little consonant with their own prejudices, or with the spirit of some other rules laid down for their especial guidance.

The Act of 1773 may be said in fact to have settled nothing save the right of Parliament to control the political management of the Company's affairs. It certainly curtailed in various ways the powers and patronage of the Court of Directors. It improved the internal economy of Leadenhall Street. It applied to British subjects in India those regular principles of law and justice which prevailed at home. But it served only to inflame, instead of allaying, the old conflict of rival authorities and unsettled jurisdictions; it reduced the Governor-General to a mere cipher, threw all his foreign policy out of gear, and gave birth to a long and violent quarrel between the Calcutta Council and the Supreme Court. The machinery designed for 'the better government of India' was all there; but the means of putting it together, and the power to make it work properly, had been forgotten.

The new Councillors sailed for India in April, 1774. Another ship which started on the same day carried out the Chief Justice, Sir Elijah Impey, and his three colleagues, Chambers, Hyde, and Lemaistre. The two ships kept near each other throughout the voyage. Several of the party took with them their wives and daughters. Of the three Councillors, Clavering, who was also appointed Commander-in-Chief, was an honest, hot-headed soldier, who had led the attack on Guadeloupe in 1759, and whose Parliamentary influence had raised him into favour with the King and Lord North. 'He brought,' says Hastings, 'strong prejudices with him, and he receives all his intelligence from men whose aim or interest it is to increase those prejudices.' The Hon. George Monson had fought in Indian campaigns on the Coast, and borne a prominent part in the conquest of Manilla in 1762. He appears to have been a man of small intellect, arrogant, rash, self-willed, but easily led by those who paid him the needful deference. Last of the triumvirate, but far the first for intellect, ability, culture, and force of character, comes Philip Francis, who had been for some years chief clerk in the War Office, and has now been identified by competent judges with the author of the once famous 'Letters of Junius.'

Macaulay, in his well-known description of that vitriolic satirist, has, according to Herman Merivale, the biographer of Francis, given us a perfect likeness of Francis himself. 'Junius was clearly a man *not destitute* of real patriotism and magnanimity,

a man whose vices were not of the sordid kind. But he must also have been a man in the highest degree arrogant and insolent; a man prone to malevolence, and prone to the error of mistaking his malevolence for public virtue. "Doest thou well to be angry?" was the question asked in old time of the Hebrew prophet. And he answered, "I do well." This was evidently the temper of Junius; and to this cause we attribute the savage cruelty which disgraces several of his letters. No man is so merciless as he who, under a strong delusion, confounds his antipathies with his duties[1].' Merivale himself speaks of his 'proud, unaccommodating spirit,' while Sir James Stephen adds 'falsehood, treachery, and calumny' to the list of his darker traits. Francis' malignant nature, his keen, versatile intellect, his arrogant self-esteem, his strong prepossessions, his combative instincts, his crafty daring, his wrong-headed zeal for any cause that took his fancy, all these qualities marked him out as a leader in the long and furious struggle into which his party were about to drag the Governor-General of Bengal.

Friendly letters from Hastings awaited each of the Councillors and Judges on their arrival at Madras. To one only of the number, his old school-fellow Sir Elijah Impey, he wrote without reserve, as rejoicing at 'the prospect of seeing so old a friend,' on whose support he might safely reckon in 'the peculiar circumstances' of his new position. On the 19th

[1] Merivale's *Memoirs of Sir P. Francis*, vol. ii.

October, 1774, the whole party landed at Chándpál Ghát, after a narrow escape from shipwreck at the Sandheads. The hour was noon, and some of the party grumbled at the heat, the confusion, and the lack of military parade. But the landing was duly heralded by a salute of seventeen guns, and the absence of troops was owing, as Hastings said, to the distance of the landing-place from Fort William[1]. An officer of Hastings' staff conducted the whole party to the Governor-General's own house at Alipúr, where he himself and most of his old colleagues stood prepared to welcome them with all befitting courtesy and respect. The new Councillors, however, made but a cold return to greetings which they were in no mood to construe in a fair and friendly spirit.

On the following day the new Council met to read the letter of instructions sent out by the Court of Directors for their behoof. The Governor-General and his colleagues were enjoined to act harmoniously together for the general good, and for the peaceful advancement of the Company's interests, financial and political. A separate Board of Trade was to be established. The military outlay must be kept within certain limits. Enquiry must be made into past abuses and oppressions. The land revenue system, as worked by Hastings, was to be let alone, and all correspondence with the country powers might be left to the Governor-General, on condition that the letters were duly laid before his Council.

[1] Merivale, Busteed.

As Barwell had not yet returned to Calcutta, the Council adjourned for business until the 24th, when Barwell took his seat at the Board. On this occasion, Hastings laid before his colleagues a clear and concise review of his past administration. The first part of the Minute was received without any sign of dissent. But his account of the Treaty of Benares and the Rohillá War at once brought out the latent hostility of the Francis faction. Then burst forth on Hastings' head a storm which was destined to rage against him long after his first assailants had died or returned home. Monson called on the Governor-General to produce all the letters which had passed between him and his agent at Lucknow. Hastings declared that no power on earth could authorise him to give up letters written in the strictest confidence, however willingly he would furnish all extracts bearing on matters of public interest. Barwell loyally stood by his old chief in refusing obedience to an *ex post facto* law thus suddenly sprung upon them[1].

But the new Councillors, eager for the fray, and confident in the goodness of their cause, would take no denial, nor stoop to any compromise, however fair. Striking at Hastings through his agent, they promptly voted the recall of Middleton from Lucknow, appointing Champion to act in his stead[2]. This was the first blow dealt by Lord North's emissaries against their nominal chief, in a quarrel which, as Macaulay puts it, 'after distracting British India, was renewed in England,

[1] *Forrest.* [2] Auber.

and in which all the most eminent statesmen and orators of the age took active part on one or the other side.'

Soon after Middleton's recall, his place was permanently filled by Bristow, the nominee of the dominant majority in Council. Champion was ordered to withdraw his brigade forthwith from Rohilkhand, and to enforce speedy payment of all moneys due from the Wazír, under a threat of removing the British troops from Oudh itself. The very men who had just been denouncing the Treaty of Benares and inveighing against the wickedness of the Rohillá War, saw no inconsistency in reaping the solid fruits of a policy which stank in their fine nostrils. In vain did Hastings bring all the weight of his reasoning and his skilled experience to bear against measures which tended to upset his best-laid schemes, to destroy his influence with neighbouring princes, and to dishonour him in the eyes of his own subjects[1]. His opponents, with the reins in their own hands, seemed wholly incapable of behaving with common fairness, or even with common decency. At the customary meetings of Council, Hastings and Barwell might plead never so earnestly for delay, for further enquiry, for the deference due to official experts; they might record their weighty protests against the acts of colleagues whose ignorant rashness equalled their self-conceit. But Clavering, Monson, and Francis gave little heed to arguments and appeals which commanded only two votes in a Council of five. Mercy and modesty were

[1] Forrest.

equally unknown to Philip Francis, whose zeal for redressing wrongs seemed but to make him the more implacable, and who wrote to Clive as if he alone could be trusted to save Bengal from ruin[1]. Clavering and Monson might seem to stand forth as leaders in the strife now raging, but they were really as clay in the hands of a potter who knew how to mould them for the furtherance of his own ends.

Before the close of 1774 the Council-room in Fort William—the new Fort which Clive had begun to build a little lower down the river in 1757—was become the scene of bitter and prolonged dissensions, which reminded Hastings of his unpleasant experiences in the days of Vansittart's rule. The insults he had to put up with rankled deep in a nature at once proud, sensitive, and kindly. Sometimes he thought of leaving the field to his pitiless opponents. But his sense of duty to his employers, a proud consciousness of his own deserts, and a clinging belief in Lord North's apparent friendliness, decided him to remain at his post pending the issue of his appeals to the Directors and their friends.

Meanwhile his temper, naturally quick, must have been sorely tried at the Council-meetings, where every act of his government was reviewed in a captious spirit by colleagues whose zeal for reforming abuses seemed to spend itself on their President alone. Whoever else was right, Hastings was always found to be in the wrong. 'We three are king,' said Francis; and

[1] Merivale.

very loudly did the fact proclaim itself to the astonished citizens of Calcutta. The Chief Justice, in his letters to Lord Thurlow, bitterly complained of 'the *hauteur*, insolence, and superior airs of authority which the members of the new Council use to the Court[1].' Hastings fought them with patient courage, week after week, in speeches, Minutes, protests, and earnest letters to friends and official patrons at home. Both parties indeed kept up an incessant fire of written documents against each other, both in the Council-room and in their private dwellings. In the war of Minutes, the Governor-General was more than a match for his assailants, but the latter could appeal to much more powerful friends at home[2].

When the violence of the majority passed all bounds of endurance, Hastings and Barwell would save their dignity by leaving the Council-room for that day. But nothing checked the headlong pugnacity of the triumvirate. They never lost a chance of wounding their President's pride, ignoring his authority, or undoing his work. Almost every detail of his past policy was shown up as a crime or a blunder by the men who had been specially warned to work harmoniously with their future colleagues. The extent of their rancour against the Governor-General may be measured by their mode of pressing their enquiry into the circumstances of the Rohillá War, and by the tenour of their dealings with the ruler of Oudh. The officers of Champion's force were invited to bear witness against

[1] *Impey's Memoirs of Sir Elijah Impey.* [2] Forrest.

the man who had sold their services to a ruthless tyrant. Colonel Leslie declined to answer for the opinions of the army as to the moral character of the late war. The evidence of Leslie and Hannay was all in favour of the accused.

Baffled at one point, the three inquisitors attacked another, to nearly as little purpose. There was no evidence of the cruelties imputed to the Wazír. Of the Rohillás and their real character they learned many things which should have constrained them largely to modify their former misconceptions. But no amount of new facts could stay them in their furious career. They even found matter for a fresh charge against their President in the handsome donation which Shujá had bestowed upon Champion's troops. And, in spite of all the evidence before them, they denounced him to the Directors as one who had waged war with 'an innocent nation,' and countenanced some of the worst atrocities committed by his ally[1].

As if to proclaim the essential pettiness of their motives, the three Councillors flavoured their despatch of November 30 with complaints of the scant courtesy shown them on their first arrival. They had been stinted of their proper salute, no troops were drawn out to greet them, Mr. Hastings had received them at his private house instead of the Council-chamber. Then there was undue delay in issuing the new commissions, and the ceremony of proclaiming the new Government was marked by the absence of

[1] Auber, Forrest.

befitting parade. Between the first and the second meeting of the Council the members were left 'in the most anxious, not to say disgraceful, situation[1].' This careful harping on small grievances, most of which were groundless and all alike frivolous, marks the temper in which the Clavering faction entered on their official tasks.

To Shujá-ud-daulá the new policy of the Calcutta Council seemed like a rending of all the ties that bound him to his English neighbours. For some years past he had stood firmly by his alliance with the power which had spared him in 1765. For Hastings he had conceived a strong personal attachment, which reflected itself in his intercourse with the British Resident at Lucknow. When Middleton showed him his letter of recall, the Wazír burst into tears over a step which seemed to betoken some hostile purpose towards himself. There are some grounds for thinking that his death, in the following January, may have been hastened by the sudden change of policy in Calcutta. He left behind him a letter imploring the Governor-General to extend to his son the friendship he had always shown for the father.

With these last wishes of the dying prince, Hastings strove hard to comply. But the foreign policy of his Government had wholly passed out of his control. Francis and his colleagues hastened to brush away all existing treaties with Oudh, and to enforce their

[1] Auber.

own conditions upon the new Wazír, Asaf-ud-daulá. Their agent Bristow, with whom they held the same kind of correspondence which they had so lately condemned in the case of Hastings, threw himself with pliant eagerness into all their plans. In vain did Hastings and Barwell plead for the fair observance of former treaties and for the personal rights of the young Wazír, as heir to his father's throne and property. In vain did Asaf-ud-daulá protest against demands which saddled his kingdom with new burdens, and robbed him of the very means of carrying on his government. Before the end of May, 1775, he had signed a new treaty, which transferred to the Company the revenue-rights over Chait Singh's Benares domains, and raised by 50,000 rupees a month the subsidy his father had paid for the British garrison in Oudh. At the same time he bound himself to pay off, with all speed, the balance of his father's debt to the Company.

Besides these hard conditions, with his own army mutinous for long arrears of pay, the helpless youth was forced to surrender to his father's widow nearly the whole of the two millions sterling which Shujá had stored up in his treasury for use in times of public need. Neither in law nor in fact had the Queen-mother any right to a share of this large treasure. She already possessed a *jaghír*, or landed estate, which yielded her fifty thousand pounds a year. But she claimed the two millions also under a will which was never produced; and her son was

frightened by Bristow into signing away his right to three-fourths of his lawful property.

Hastings steadily refused his sanction to acts which he was utterly powerless to forbid. Even the Directors demurred at first to the notion that their treaties with Oudh had expired with the death of Shujá-ud-daulá[1]. But their sense of justice soon gave place to the satisfaction derived from the new improvement in their financial prospects. In December, 1776, they recorded their 'entire approbation' of a bargain which appeared to promise them 'solid and permanent advantages.' Among the first fruits of the treaty thus forced upon the new Wazír was an alarming mutiny of his unpaid soldiers, which could not be quelled without the shedding of much blood.

Meanwhile the Governor-General was trying hard to set himself right with the powers at home. He sent Lord North a copy of all his correspondence with Middleton. To his friends at the India House and among the Proprietors he wrote in a strain of anxious pleading for their support against the malice and the wrong-doing of his foes in India. 'There are many gentlemen in England'—he writes in April, 1775, to his confidential agents, Graham and Macleane—'who have been eye-witnesses of my conduct. For God's sake, call upon them to draw my true portrait, for the devil is not so black as these fellows have painted me . . . If I am not deceived, there is not a man in Calcutta, scarce in Bengal, unconnected with Cla-

[1] Mill.

vering and his associates, who does not execrate their conduct and unite in wishes for my success against them.' Some weeks earlier he had notified to both these gentlemen his resolution to return home 'on the first ship of the next season,' if the Directors should disapprove of the Benares Treaty or of the Rohillá War, and 'mark an evident disinclination' towards him. This announcement he left them free to make such use of as they might think proper. By the middle of May, things had happened which caused Hastings to change his mind and withdraw from his agents the discretion given them in March [1]. He determined at all hazards to await the issue of his further appeal, 'believing it impossible that men whose actions are so frantic can be permitted to remain in charge of so important a trust.' This change of purpose was well known to his colleagues, for Francis writes in November to Lord Barrington that 'Mr. Hastings is determined, at all events, to hold it out until the return of the answer to my first letters [2].'

Writing by the same mail to the Chairman of the Company, Francis advised him to recall Barwell rather than Hastings: 'You had better keep this man, who has some parts and considerable experience.' By that time he had learned to correct his first impressions of 'this man's' character and abilities. But six months earlier the position for Hastings had become wellnigh intolerable. His opponents

[1] *Gleig.* [2] Merivale.

had stripped him even of his patronage. Beyond the management of the revenues and such other business as none of his colleagues ventured to take in hand, he was little better than a clerk in his masters' service. His countrymen in Calcutta saw with wondering sympathy the political effacement of their nominal head. Many of the natives, with their usual readiness to desert the weak, had begun to play into the hands of the Francis faction, who were bent, as Hastings said, on raking up 'out of the dirt of Calcutta' any bits of scandal which might serve to blacken his good name. Every one who sought to curry favour with the triumvirate, or to pay off a grudge against the Governor-General, found in the new Council greedy listeners to his tale. No story was too absurd, no informer too vile, no means too crooked, for the ends they wrought at under the guise of zeal for the public welfare.

An Indian Government, says Macaulay, 'has only to let it be understood that it wishes a particular man to be ruined, and in twenty-four hours it will be furnished with grave charges, supported by depositions so full and circumstantial that any person unaccustomed to Asiatic mendacity would regard them as decisive. It is well if the signature of the destined victim is not counterfeited at the foot of some illegal compact, and if some treasonable paper is not slipped into a hiding-place in his house.'

There is no need to accuse Francis and his colleagues *of suborning* false witness against their chief. It is

enough to know that their ignorant rashness made them an easy prey to the knaves who traded on their notorious enmity towards the Governor-General. In their search for evidence of Hastings' wickedness they clutched at any falsehood which came to hand.

CHAPTER VII

Hastings Agonistes

1775-1777

Foremost among the crows who were now pecking at the wounded eagle was Hastings' old enemy, Nanda-Kumár. That wily Bráhman saw the right moment for taking full revenge on the man who had more than once exposed and thwarted his mischievous intrigues. On the 11th March, 1775, he delivered into Francis' hands a letter which, at Nanda-Kumár's request, was laid next day before the Council. It was handed in unopened, but Francis owned that he had some inkling of its general purport. The writer charged the Governor-General with various acts of fraud, corruption, and oppression. Hastings was openly accused of taking bribes from the Manni Begam, of sharing in the plunder amassed by Raza Khán, and of procuring that officer's acquittal in return for another large bribe. In a second letter, which reached the Council on the 13th, Nanda-Kumár asked leave to be heard in person at the Board, and to bring witnesses forward in support of his charges.

Monson moved that the Rájá should appear *before the Board* and produce his evidence. Hastings

indignantly denied the right of his colleagues to enter into charges coming from a source so foully tainted. The triumvirate insisted on their demand. Hastings vehemently protested against so gross an insult to his office and himself. His colleagues, if they chose, might form themselves into a Committee of Enquiry. But he utterly refused to accept for his judges the men who were really his accusers, or acknowledge in any way their right to bring such matters before the Board. He 'could not suffer the dignity of the First Magistrate of this Government to be debased, by sitting to be arraigned as a criminal at the Council Board of which he was the President by the man of character so notoriously infamous as that of Rájá Nanda-Kumár.' Barwell demanded that the whole question should be referred to the Supreme Court. But the triumvirate were above all considerations of justice, decency, and common sense. At length Hastings broke up the meeting for that day, and quitted the Council-chamber, followed by his one supporter, Barwell [1].

That a Governor-General in such a strait could not have acted otherwise, with any regard for the dignity of his office, no sane person will now deny. And yet one grave historian, writing long afterwards, had the courage to contend that Hastings' 'eagerness to stifle, and his exertions to obstruct enquiry, on all occasions where his conduct came under complaint, constituted in itself an article of proof, which added materially to the weight of whatever came against him from any

[1] Auber, Gleig, Forrest.

other source[1].' It is from passages like this, which abound in James Mill's *History*, that we learn how much of gross unfairness may be covered by an air and tone of severe impartiality.

It was late in the afternoon when Hastings and Barwell withdrew from the stormy debate. Monson and Francis at once voted Clavering into the empty chair, and Nanda-Kumár was summoned before the mock Council. He produced a letter from the Manni Begam, in which Hastings figured as the receiver of presents from that lady at the hands of Nanda-Kumár himself. The signature was found to differ widely from that of a letter sent by her a few days back to Sir John D'Oyly of the Secretariat. The seal, however, appeared to be the Begam's own. A message to Hastings failed to bring him back; and the triumvirate, in spite of his absence, the lateness of the hour, and the lack of real proof, hastened to pass their judgment on the case. They found Hastings guilty of taking presents from the Begam to the value of £35,000; and they ordered him to repay that sum forthwith into the public treasury[2].

The Governor-General refused to obey any order issued by a Court whose right to try such cases he utterly disowned. The letter itself he pronounced a palpable forgery, a fact which the Begam herself ere long attested. Meanwhile, fresh charges were laid before the Council by the Ráni of Bardwán, by an emissary from the young Nawáb of Bengal, and by

[1] *Mill.* [2] Auber, Forrest.

other worshippers of the rising sun. Some of these struck at Hastings through his own countrymen: Grant, an accountant, and the two Fowkes, father and son. One obscure native accused him of embezzling the greater part of the salary payable to the Faujdár of Húglí. No evidence of real weight was adduced in any instance; and yet the triumvirate recorded their firm conviction that there was 'no species of peculation from which the Honourable Governor-General has thought it reasonable to abstain.' They deliberately charged him with having by such means alone amassed a fortune of forty lakhs of rupees in two years and a half.

Thrice in that month of March did Hastings break up a Council-meeting, rather than bear the indignity of presiding at his own trial. 'The trumpet has been sounded,' he writes on the 25th, 'and the whole host of informers will soon crowd into Calcutta with their complaints and ready depositions. Nanda-Kumár holds his darbár in complete state—sends for Zámíndárs and their vakils—coaxing and threatening them for complaints, which no doubt he will get in abundance, besides what he forges for himself.' Clavering and his colleagues spent their days in rummaging official papers, interviewing accusers, examining witnesses, and jotting down the evidence thus elicited. The business of taking notes and formulating charges devolved upon Francis, whose skilful pen was busy weaving a rare web of lies, assumptions, and innuendoes, for the ruin of a Governor whose place he already

aspired to fill. 'Was it for this,' asked Hastings, 'that the legislature of Great Britain formed the new system of government for Bengal, and armed it with powers extending to every part of the British Empire in India[1]?'

Even Hastings' resolute spirit quailed for a moment at the prospect which lay before him. We have seen how at this time he wrote to Lord North pressing either for his immediate recall, or for some clear token of that Minister's continued support. But the despondent mood was not to last long. While Francis was exulting in the near success of his schemes for supplanting his only rival, and Nanda-Kumár was tasting the sweets of gratified revenge, they little knew what an under-current of disaster was ere long to suck the latter down for ever. In the crisis of his fortunes, the Governor-General turned for help to the Supreme Court. On the 11th April, 1775, a charge of conspiracy was lodged in Court against the Bráhman, the elder Fowke, and one or two of their abettors. They were accused of compelling Kamál-ud-din, a revenue-farmer, to bear false witness against the Governor-General. After a long and careful enquiry, Fowke and Nanda-Kumár were bound over to take their trial, and Hastings to prosecute them, at the next assizes. Clavering and his allies proved their respect for the judges and for their own dignity by paying Nanda-Kumár the unusual compliment of a formal visit at his own house.

[1] Auber, Merivale, Gleig.

But Nemesis was already dogging the Bráhman's steps. On the 6th May, Nanda-Kumár was charged before Lemaistre, as the sitting magistrate of Calcutta, with obtaining a large sum of money from a dead man's estate by means of a forged bond. The accuser was an attorney named Mohan Prasád. Lemaistre and Hyde went through the case together. After an enquiry which lasted all day, they committed the accused to jail for trial on a felonious charge.

The blow which fell so suddenly on the old arch-plotter had in fact been hanging over him for more than a year past. It has been clearly shown by Sir James Stephen that ever since March, 1774, Mohan Prasád had been trying to get hold of certain documents essential for the opening of his case. These documents were then lodged in the Mayor's Court, to which he applied in vain for their surrender. When the new Supreme Court was set up in the room of the older tribunal, Mohan Prasád renewed his applications with better success, and about the end of April, 1775, the needful documents passed into the hands of Nanda-Kumár's old enemy, who lost no time in turning them to account[1].

During the month that elapsed between the arrest and the trial of Nanda-Kumár, his patrons in the Council pursued their old tactics with relentless zeal. Because the Manni Begam disowned her letter to Nanda-Kumár, they found a pretext for turning her

[1] *Sir J. Stephen's Nuncomar and Impey.*

out of her office and appointing Rájá Gurdas in her stead. The post of Náib Súbah was revived for the benefit of Muhammad Raza Khán. In the teeth of Hastings' protests they conferred *khiláts*, or robes of honour, upon the Ráni of Bardwan and her infant son. In their letters to the Directors they expressed their belief in Nanda-Kumár's innocence, hinted at Hastings' complicity in the matter, and accused the judges of treating the prisoner with needless cruelty before his trial. They demanded that he should be enlarged on bail. They scolded Impey for questioning the wisdom of their interference on behalf of their imprisoned friend. Nanda-Kumár had complained to the Council of the injury done by his imprisonment to his caste; and the Council had taken it upon themselves to enquire into the matter before referring it to the Supreme Court. The Judges refused to let him out on bail; but Impey sent his own physician to see the prisoner, and did his best with the help of certain Pandits to remove all difficulties raised on the score of caste. Meanwhile, Hastings wrote to Graham and Macleane the letter of May 18, in which he revoked his former instructions, and declared himself resolved to await the issue of his last appeal to the home Government. The fact that 'the old gentleman was in jail, and in a fair way to be hanged,' might well encourage him to stand his ground, pending a reply to the scathing sentences in which he exposed the persistent malice of men who, after making him '*the butt of* unceasing persecution for these seven

months past,' had finally blackened his honest efforts to justify himself. 'This is the very wantonness of oppression; it is like putting the man to the rack, and exclaiming against him for struggling with his tormentors; while rewards are held out publicly to those who will offer themselves as my accusers[1].'

On the 8th June, 1775, in the height of the hot season, Nanda-Kumár was arraigned before a Court of four judges, headed by Impey, with a full English jury, on charges capital according to English law. Two English barristers defended the prisoner. Throughout the trial, which lasted eight long days, the judges wore their wigs, and retired, it is said, three or four times daily to change their linen. The trial lasted until 4 A.M. of the 16th, when a verdict of guilty was brought in. With the entire concurrence of his fellow-judges, Impey sentenced the convicted forger to death.

It might have been expected that some of the Rájá's powerful friends would have made a strong effort to save the life of a man whom they had lately held in such high esteem. Francis was ready at first to do something on his behalf, but Clavering and Monson flatly refused to meddle in a business which had no bearing on their public duties[2]. One of the jurymen signed the only petition for a respite which ever reached the Supreme Court. Francis himself took no notice of the piteous appeal for help which Nanda-

[1] Stephen, Impey, Auber. [2] Stephen.

Kumár addressed to him on the last day of July[1]. A petition from the convict was handed to Clavering on the 4th August, but he took care to know nothing of its contents until after the sentence had been carried out. And when the petition came to be laid before the Council, it was Francis who first demanded that the paper should be burnt by the common hangman, as containing a manifest libel on the judges[2].

On the morning of the 5th August, 1775, Nanda-Kumár was hanged on the Maidan outside Calcutta. He underwent his doom with a quiet courage and dignity not uncommon at such moments among his countrymen. A detailed account of the execution, written at the time by Macrabie, the Sheriff of Calcutta, a brother-in-law and a faithful follower of Philip Francis, was afterwards to furnish Burke and Elliot with a theme for much furious invective, and to become the groundwork for some splendid passages in Macaulay's well-known essay. Burke was never weary of proclaiming that Hastings had murdered Nanda-Kumár by the hands of Sir Elijah Impey. Macaulay, with far less excuse for his evil-speaking, brands Impey with the foul fame of Jeffreys, and declares that none but idiots and biographers can doubt that Hastings was 'the real mover in the business,' even while he doubts whether Nanda-Kumár's death can justly be reckoned among Hastings' crimes. A recent writer, Mr. Beveridge, tries in vain to show

[1] Mortvale. [2] Impey.

that the Governor-General did conspire with Impey to murder his ancient foe [1].

It is true that Hastings had been driven into a corner, and it is certain that some men in his position would not have scrupled to save themselves from utter ruin by foul means. But if past character counts for anything, Warren Hastings was not the man to screen himself from any show of complicity in one crime by the deliberate commission of another. Full weight at least is due to his solemn declaration, made on oath before the judges, that he had never, directly or indirectly, countenanced or forwarded the prosecution for forgery against Nanda-Kumár. Nobody in Calcutta, not even in Hastings' Council, seems to have directly impugned the justice of the verdict, or to have plainly hinted that the Governor-General took any part in the prosecution; for Francis' letter of August 7, to Admiral Hughes [2], deals only in cunning innuendoes which the reader may interpret as he will.

Biographers may sometimes be foolish; but so are critics who jump to rash conclusions from premises however specious. Because Nanda-Kumár's death may have removed a viper out of Hastings' path, *post hoc* need not therefore be translated *propter hoc*. There is no valid evidence to support this view. Sir James Stephen, who is neither an idiot nor a biographer, but a high judicial authority on the law of evidence and the criminal law, has gone more deeply,

[1] Beveridge's *Trial of Mahárája Nanda-Kumár*. [2] Merivale.

carefully, and impartially, than any other writer, past or present, into all the documents bearing on the trial of Nanda-Kumár, and has recorded judgment in favour alike of Impey and the Governor-General. The Rájá, he thinks, was fairly tried and justly condemned from the judges' point of view, while Impey in particular treated him on the whole with marked leniency. As for Hastings' share in the business, Sir J. Stephen finds that it amounted to none at all. There is no evidence whatever to show that he had any hand in the prosecution, or that he did anything to ensure the prisoner's fate [1].

We have seen how Clavering and his colleagues became in fact consenting parties to what Elliot, twelve years afterwards under Francis' prompting, called the judicial murder of Nanda-Kumár. When Francis was twitted in the House of Commons with his own share in the alleged crime, he replied with characteristic impudence that he had acted mainly through his fears for Clavering's safety, seeing 'that the judges had gone all lengths, that they had dipped their hands in blood for a political purpose, and that they might again proceed on the same principle,' backed as they were by the whole force of popular feeling in Calcutta [2]. It is strange to think that Francis' able biographer should have believed in the good faith of a defence so glaringly absurd [3].

[1] Stephen's *Nuncomar and Impey*.
[2] *Impey*, Stephen. [3] Macaulay.

The attempt of Mr. Beveridge to prove Hastings' complicity with the alleged murderers of Nanda-Kumár has failed to weaken the conclusions drawn by Sir J. Stephen. Hastings' friend, Alexander Elliot, seems to have been the fittest man available as interpreter during the trial. The Governor-General's alleged interviews with Mohan Prasád rest only on the tainted evidence of Nanda-Kumár himself. It is only an assumption that Hastings instigated his secretary, Belli, to frustrate Farrer's efforts at obtaining a reprieve for his client. And there is still less ground for asserting that Hastings has himself expressly referred to the support which Impey gave him by hanging Nanda-Kumár. In a letter written some years afterwards, the Governor-General spoke of Impey as a man 'to whose support he was at one time indebted for the safety of his fortune, honour, and reputation.' These words evidently refer, as Sir J. Stephen holds, to the issue of Clavering's struggle with Hastings for the Governor-Generalship; but even if they referred to the previous trial of Nanda-Kumár, it would be wholly unfair to take them as a virtual confession of Hastings' success in using Impey as his tool. They tend rather to prove his innocence of any plot for the Rájá's destruction; for he would never have cared to speak so publicly of a transaction in which both men had borne so criminal a part[1]. Mr. Beveridge, in short, has utterly failed to prove, either that Hastings was

[1] See an article of my own which appeared in the *Athenæum* for June 4, 1887.

the real prosecutor, or that Impey acted in collusion with his friend.

The hanging of Nanda-Kumár brought Hastings a welcome relief from some part of his former burden. 'The Governor is well assured'—sneers Francis in his Minute of September—'that no man who regards his own safety will stand forward as his accuser.' The mouths of mercenary informers were closed thenceforward by the blow which had struck down the arch-informer himself. Cheered by the support of his own countrymen and the good-will of all the leading natives in Calcutta, the harassed Governor could take breath for renewing the struggle with his factious colleagues. On the 7th August, he found time to write Dr. Johnson a friendly letter of thanks for the book he had sent him through Mr. Justice Chambers of the Supreme Court. He tells the great English scholar of his own efforts to promote research into the history, traditions, arts, and natural products of India; of his success in compiling 'an abstract of the Gentoo law;' and begs Johnson to accept a copy of Bogle's Tibet journal, which he will find not unworthy of perusal, however wanting in the spirit of the Doctor's own 'Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland.'

To Lord Mansfield, in the following January, he sends a complete copy of 'Halhed's Code,' with a plan of his own, approved by his friend Impey, for defining and regulating the respective powers of the

[1] Gleig.

Council and the Supreme Court. In spite of the vague language of the Regulating Act, his own relations with the judges had thus far worked easily. He takes pleasure in avowing that on all occasions it has been Impey's aim in particular, and generally that of the other three judges, 'to support the authority of Government, and temper the law of England with the laws, religious customs, and manners of the natives[1].'

Meanwhile his enemies in the Council had soon returned to the game of baiting a President who still refused to throw up his post at their bidding. They restored to the Nawáb of Bengal the executive and judicial powers which Hastings had made over to his own officers. They suffered Oudh to fall into hopeless anarchy rather than relax their demands for money due from the Wazír. Even the hundred rupees which Hastings gave in charity to an agent of Kásim Alí, whose petition he laid before the Council in September, 1775, became the pretext for fresh attacks upon the President's character. From 'this small sample' Hastings invited the Directors to judge of 'the distracted state of your affairs, and the temper and objects of the members who rule your present administration.' Well might he complain that the merest trifles served to impede the course of business and swell the Minutes of the public proceedings. But no provocations, great or small, should tempt him to retire and leave his assailants uncontrolled masters of the Government. 'Prompted equally by duty and

[1] Gleig.

gratitude, I have hitherto resolved to bear my part in this distracted scene, and if I live I will see the end of it[1].'

For the present, however, he had to keep his soul in patience as best he could. His opponents continued to worry and thwart him at every turn. They accused him of overtaxing the Zamíndárs and oppressing the ráyats under the revenue settlements of 1772, while they opposed his best efforts to remedy the evils of which they complained. They refused to aid him in protecting natives of rank from imprisonment for debt by order of the Supreme Court. The very loyalty which led him, sometimes against his better judgment, to work with the triumvirate rather than against them, failed to win for him a like concession in return.

If Hastings proposed one course of action, they were sure to follow another. In September, 1774, the Bombay Government had formed an alliance with Ragunáth Ráo, commonly called Raghuba, a Maráthá leader of old repute, uncle to the Peshwá, Náráyan Ráo, on whose death, in 1773, Raghuba got himself installed at Poona as his successor. But a rival party, headed by the able Nána Farnavís, ere long set up against him the posthumous son of the late Peshwá, under the title of Madhu Ráo II. The Maráthá leaders took different sides in the struggle that followed. Defeated in the field, Raghuba turned for help to the English at Bombay. The Court of Directors

[1] Auber.

had long been hankering after the island of Salsette and the flourishing port of Bassein. In hopes of gratifying their wish, as well as frustrating the designs of the Portuguese, the Bombay Government agreed to help Raghuba with a body of troops in return for his cession of those two places and several more.

But they had reckoned without the Government of Bengal and the powers committed to it by the Regulating Act. Hastings joined with his colleagues in condemning the Treaty of Surat and in countermanding the preparations for war. But later messages from Bombay induced him to modify his former opinion. It was too late, he urged, to withdraw with safety and honour from an enterprise already on foot. Barwell supported his chief's demand; but the triumvirate were still inexorable. In spite of the success already achieved by our troops and sailors, they declared the treaty annulled, ordered the return of Keating's column to Bombay, and sent Colonel Upton to negotiate a peace at Poona on their own behalf. Some weeks later indeed, when a peaceful settlement seemed hopeless, the Bombay Government were left free to take their own course. But before the new orders from Calcutta could reach Bombay, the Treaty of Purandhar had already been signed on the 1st March, 1776. Under this treaty the English were to give up Salsette, which they had already captured, as well as other conquests, in exchange for a district near Broach; and twelve lakhs of rupees were promised them, 'as a favour,' towards the expenses of the war.

Their agreement with Raghuba was formally annulled in return for the pension secured to their late ally [1].

The interests of the Company, and the good faith of the Bombay Government, were thus alike sacrificed to the reckless formalism of a dominant faction in the Supreme Council. Hastings' opponents had the spirit indeed to join with him in refusing on any terms to give up Salsette. But when the Directors announced their approval of the treaty with Raghuba, and condemned the policy which issued in the Treaty of Purandhar, Francis and Clavering threw all the blame of failure on the Governor-General himself.

The treaty in question was little better than a hollow truce. Neither at Poona nor at Bombay was it carefully observed. Raghuba appealed against it in a letter to the King of England. Troops were sent from Bombay to garrison Surat, and the Bombay Council invited Raghuba to their own capital as their pensioned guest. Salsette remained in our hands, and the Poona Government withheld payment of the donation promised under the treaty. In March, 1777, a French adventurer arrived at Poona as envoy from the King of France, who was on the point of declaring war against England. Nána Farnavís, who had become the foremost man at Poona and was strong-set against the new treaty, received the Chevalier de St. Lubin with open arms. The Bombay Government took just alarm at the prospect of a close alliance between the Maráthás and the French. The Court of Directors

[1] *Auber*, G. Forrest's *Selections from the Bombay State-Papers*.

openly deplored the Treaty of Purandhar, and their Governor-General was quietly waiting for the right moment to set it formally aside [1].

Meanwhile, affairs in Madras also had been running a strangely tortuous and turbid course. In 1773 the Nawáb of the Karnatic, Muhammad Alí, persuaded the Madras Council, then ruled by Governor Wynch, to join him on various pretexts in attacking and despoiling the tributary Rájá of Tanjore. For this act of disobedience to recent orders from home, the Directors summarily expelled Wynch from their service, and despatched their old servant Lord Pigot to take his place. The new Governor proceeded faithfully to carry out his masters' commands. The imprisoned Rájá was restored to his throne in April, 1776. But Lord Pigot's efforts to deal justly and to reform some crying abuses raised against him a host of enemies, at the head of whom was Paul Benfield, the fortunate holder of large assignments on the Tanjore revenues in return for moneys lent at enormous interest to the Nawáb himself. Benfield's claims were at first rejected as fraudulent by the Madras Council. But Benfield and other creditors of the Nawáb put such pressure upon the Council that the adverse vote was presently rescinded by a majority of seven to five. Lord Pigot damaged a good case by suspending two of the Councillors and placing his Commander-in-Chief under arrest. Violence begat violence. The Governor himself was seized and thrown into prison by order of his

[1] Auber, Forrest, Marshman.

own Council, and the majority appointed one of their number to act in his stead. Lord Pigot's appeal to Calcutta met with no support, even from Hastings, who held with his colleagues that the Governor had exceeded his lawful powers. The Court of Directors convened a general meeting, at which the conduct of Lord Pigot's adversaries was strongly condemned. Orders were sent out for his immediate release; seven of his Council were dismissed the service; and the officers who arrested him were to be tried by court-martial. But before these orders reached Madras, Lord Pigot's long confinement had ended in his death on 11th May, 1777.

The death of Monson in September, 1776, gave Hastings a few months' respite from the insults and persecutions which wounded him none the less deeply for the proud and patient courage with which he confronted them. Francis and Clavering might still talk and write against him; but, for some months at any rate, he could make use of his casting-vote. His hands were thus strengthened at a timely moment for the work of revising the land settlements of 1772. In order to collect full materials for the new settlement he appointed a special commission of enquiry, headed by Anderson and Bogle, two of the ablest civil officers in Bengal. A few weeks later, Middleton resumed his old post of Resident at Lucknow in the room of Francis' favourite, Bristow. The younger Fowke was speedily recalled from Benares. All these measures *were as gall* and wormwood to Clavering and Francis,

blustered, talked about jobs, wrote sharp Minutes, spread false stories, but in vain. Hastings knew strength, and calmly defied them from the bulk of his casting-vote. As Francis spitefully put it friend in England, he 'is actually in possession ull power, and drives furiously.'

CHAPTER VIII

Rout of Philip Francis

1776-1778

During this period the news that reached Hastings from England would have driven him to the verge of despair, if he had been the 'timid, desperate, distracted being' that Francis painted him[1]. On many of the points at issue between him and his colleagues, the Court of Directors had justified the latter, and reserved their censures for himself. They had begun to side with the perverse majority against the best and faithfullest of their own servants. While Hastings was still looking to Lord North for more justice, if nothing more, that Minister was exerting all his influence with the Directors, in order to bring about the recall of Hastings and the appointment of Clavering in his stead. Macleane's letters to his patron reveal the progress of a plot which, but for Hastings' firmness and the loyalty of friends outside the Directorate, would have been crowned with full success. Lord North's first attempt to secure a hostile vote from the India House came to nothing; but in May, 1776,

[1] Merivale.

he succeeded in gaining a majority of one. In the Court of Proprietors, however, the Governor-General had a large number of stanch allies. They flocked to the general meeting held on the 15th May, and after a long debate carried a vote of support to Hastings by a large majority. A few weeks later the Directors recanted their former decision by a majority of two[1].

The position at this time was highly dramatic. Hastings vowed that nothing but his king's commands should induce him to throw up his office. Clavering and Francis were busily intriguing, each against the other, for their President's place; each threatening to retire if he could not get it. At home Lord North was working to secure for Clavering the post which Francis already made sure of winning for himself. The Court of Directors were in mortal fear that Lord North would fulfil his threat of calling on Parliament to abolish the Company's political power. Alarmed at the uncertain attitude of the India House, and at Lord North's undoubted eagerness to gratify Clavering's powerful friends, Macleane and other of Hastings' well-wishers set themselves to bring about a compromise which would enable Hastings to retire with all honour from a struggle which he could not hope much longer to maintain.

By the end of October, 1776, Macleane fancied that he and the Minister had settled everything in supposed accordance with Hastings' own desires. But when Clavering a few days after was gazetted a Knight of

[1] Gleig.

the Bath, and no special honour was conferred upon Hastings, this looked to Macleane like a breach of treaty on Lord North's part, and he counselled Hastings not to resign without clear assurance of a baronetcy or an Irish peerage. And yet, only a few weeks later, Macleane had laid his patron's resignation before the Court of Directors, on the strength of certain instructions which Hastings had very soon afterwards withdrawn, and which all his letters during the past twelvemonth had implicitly disavowed. However honestly Macleane himself had acted in this matter, the Directors must have been fully aware of Hastings' resolution to leave his post only at the command of those who had placed him there. But now they hastened, after brief enquiry, to accept an offer which would save them from the appearance of a direct surrender to Lord North's dictation [1].

In their eagerness to throw over their best servant, they assumed that Hastings would confirm his agent's act, an assumption as ill founded as Hastings' belief in Lord North's friendliness, or as Macleane's conviction that his employer would gladly accept of any compromise which offered him a safe retreat from a position no longer tenable. And underneath the assumption lay the wish to be rid of a Governor, whom many of the Directors had come to regard as a secret enemy to their interests, because he aimed at bringing the country powers into closer relations with the British Crown.

[1] Gleig, Auber.

Meanwhile the Governor-General busied himself with the work that lay before him in all branches of public business. His plans for developing the Company's rule and influence by asserting their right to govern in the name of the British nation alone, and by encouraging native rulers to accept as their overlord the king of Great Britain, proved at least the clearness of his mental vision, and the practical spirit of a policy which aimed at making the best of accomplished facts, and clearing off the shadows that concealed their true significance. But the virulence of his enemies led the Directors to mistake the counsels of a true friend for the crafty utterances of a self-convicted traitor.

On the question of revising the land-settlements, as on almost every other, Francis and Hastings took opposite sides. The former, inspired by one school of Indian officers, would have forestalled by many years the Regulation of 1793, under which Lord Cornwallis settled the land-revenues of Bengal for ever at fixed rates with the Zamíndárs. Hastings, on the other hand, sought to develope the principles of his former settlement, by means of a careful enquiry into land-tenures, title-deeds, crop-values, cesses, and all the conflicting claims of Zamíndárs and Rayats. He proposed, with Barwell's sanction, to sweep away all taxes levied on the Rayats since 1765, to farm out the bulk of the lands in Bengal on leases for one or two lives to the highest bidders, with a preference for Zamíndárs, and to fix the charge for land-revenue at

a fair and moderate rate, guided by the average yield of the past three years. The Special Commission under Anderson and Bogle set to work; but its formation was denounced by Hastings' opponents as a flagrant job, and his honest efforts to re-assess the land-revenue on a solid basis of ascertained facts and common justice to all classes were derided by the Court of Directors, who sneeringly expressed their surprise that any further enquiry should have been found needful 'after seven years' researches in the same field.' They even went so far as to censure Hastings and Barwell for taking advantage of Monson's death to outvote the other two. In a previous despatch Hastings' plan of long leases was set aside, and he was bidden to make his settlements yearly on the most advantageous terms[1]. Beaten in Council, Francis had appealed to the India House, and his poisoned arrows found their mark.

Early in 1777, while news of a yet more serious purport was on its way out to Calcutta, Hastings sent home to his friend Alexander Elliot a careful statement of his plan for 'extending the influence of the British nation to every part of India, not too remote from their possessions, without enlarging the circle of their defence, or involving them in hazardous or indefinite engagements.' To this end he would 'accept of the allegiance of such of our neighbours as shall sue to be enlisted among the friends and allies of the king of Great Britain.' Shujá-ud-daulá, for instance,

[1] Auber.

'would have thought it an honour to be called the Vizier of the king of England, and offered at one time to coin siccas in his Majesty's name.' On this footing he proposed to renew his old relations with the present ruler of Oudh, and to form a defensive league with the Rájá of Berár. Every prince who sought our alliance on such terms might be aided by a contingent of British troops or Sepoys, in return for a sufficient yearly subsidy. By such means Hastings hoped to ensure the well-being of British India, and to counteract the designs of the Poona Government, whose intrigues with the French and the Nizám boded no small danger to the Company's rule. Here we have the first draught of that subsidiary system, which some of Hastings' successors carried out to issues far wider and more aggressive than he himself had either suggested or desired[1].

Before such a scheme could be put into practice, it was clearly needful that the Governor-General should be freed from the trammels which still surrounded him. 'An active and permanent form of government here, and a fixed channel of correspondence at home,' seemed to Hastings the main conditions of success. For the present, however, he could only broach the subject to a few particular friends, and await the issue of his efforts to obtain a fair hearing from the powers at home.

The crisis of his long struggle was soon to come. On the 19th June, 1777, the fateful despatches from

[1] Gleig.

England were opened and read in the Council Chamber, Hastings learned what his private letters had already told him, that the offer of his resignation had been accepted, that Sir John Clavering was empowered to succeed him as Governor-General, and that Wheler had been appointed to the vacant seat in Council. Little as he relished the result of his agents' blundering, Hastings was not prepared to disavow their act. 'I held myself bound by it,' he wrote to Lord North, 'and was resolved to ratify it.' But Clavering's rash violence defeated its own object. Instead of allowing the Governor-General to choose his own time for resigning his post, he summoned a Council next morning in his own name, took the oaths as Governor-General, called on Hastings to yield up the keys of the Fort and Treasuries, and commanded the troops in Fort William and the neighbouring stations to obey no orders except his own. Francis of course abetted his colleague and tool in these acts of lawless usurpation, although a few days later, when defeat was certain, he asked for 'the honour and happiness of assuming the character of mediator.'

Two days before the despatches were opened, Hastings had notified his intention to resign. But now he made up his mind to stand his ground, rather than surrender to lawless violence the powers he would else have laid down in a regular way. Both in the army and the civil service he could still count upon many devoted friends. By virtue of his office the Governor-General could also act as Commander-

in-Chief. His counter-orders to the troops were cheerfully obeyed. Colonel Morgan closed the gates of Fort William against General Clavering, and a like answer came from Barrackpur and Baj-Baj. An appeal from Hastings and Barwell to the Supreme Court resulted in a crowning victory for the Governor-General. All four judges ruled 'clearly, unanimously, and decidedly,' that Clavering had no right to assume an office from which Mr. Hastings, even according to the terms of Macleane's letter, had not yet retired. 'It was quite evident,' they said, that Hastings 'was not dead, that he was not removed, and that he had not resigned.'

Hastings and Barwell were for going yet further. They declared that Clavering had by his own act vacated his seat in Council, as well as the post of Commander-in-Chief. But the judges found that Hastings had no legal power to declare such vacancy; and they advised a reference of that and other questions to the home Government. The Governor-General bowed to their decision, and a formal vote in Council on the 25th June closed a quarrel which had nearly ripened into a civil war[1]. From his letters of this date to Lord North and the India House, it is easy to understand the motives which led Hastings, in spite of his warm regard for Macleane, to assert his outraged dignity at all costs, and to declare himself bound by every tie of duty to retain his post until he could honourably quit it. He has no hope indeed of re-

[1] Auber, Gleig, Impey.

taining it much longer. But he entreats the Minister not to let him be 'dragged from it like a felon, after the labour of twenty-seven years dedicated to the service of the Company and the aggrandisement of the British dominion[1].'

On the 8th August, 1777, Hastings married Mrs. Imhoff under her maiden name. Imhoff seems to have left Calcutta a few years before, but the divorce suit dragged on so slowly, that the award had not reached Calcutta until this year. The second Mrs. Hastings was then about thirty, and her new husband forty-five. Even Francis, who had always discredited the fact of her former marriage, was ere long to admit that she 'behaves with perfect propriety in her new station, and deserves every mark of respect[2].'

On the 29th of that month, Sir John Clavering died of dysentery. His health had been failing visibly for more than a year past. If it be true that he had lately figured among the wedding guests, the fact bears witness rather to Hastings' placable temper, than to any thought of triumphing over a vanquished rival. Whatever causes may have concurred to weaken Clavering's bodily powers, there is no sort of warrant for connecting his last illness with any incidents of the wedding. He was taken ill on his way home from a visit to Sir Elijah Impey, and died within the next fortnight. The old man's death, however, as Hastings wrote to a friend in November, 'has produced a state of quiet in our

[1] Gleig. [2] Merivale, Busteed.

councils, which I shall endeavour to preserve during the remainder of the time which may be allotted to me.' Francis of course pursued the crooked tenour of his old ways, surprising Hastings by the 'levity' with which he made and revoked his promises of support to this or that measure proposed in Council. But for the present he always found himself in a minority of one [1].

Wheler's arrival in December brought Francis an ally whom Hastings vainly tried to conciliate. But Barwell's steadfast loyalty ensured to Hastings the full benefit of his casting vote. 'The two junior members may tease, but they cannot impede business,' wrote the Governor-General to Laurence Sulivan; and he took all fair advantage of his hard-won ascendency. Anderson's Commission pursued its task without further hindrance. Muhammad Raza was presently turned out of the office which Clavering had revived for his behoof; and the Nawáb of Bengal, now twenty years old, was relieved of the costly guardianship which he no longer required. By an arrangement made with the Nawáb of Oudh, his regular force of Sepoys, commanded by British officers, was transferred to the Company's service, while the cost of its maintenance was secured by a special charge upon the land-revenues of Oudh. In this measure, which Hastings viewed mainly as the amendment of a faulty system, Sir Alfred Lyall notes 'the formal beginning of that remarkable and extensive organisa-

[1] Impey, Gleig.

tion of subsidised forces and contingents, which has played a curious part in our Indian wars and treaties[1].'

The removal of Muhammad Raza from his post of power at Murshidábád was the necessary sequel to his rejection of Hastings' friendly overtures on behalf of the young Nawáb. The Governor-General knew that Francis was trying to do him all the mischief he could with natives of rank and influence in Bengal, and he looked upon the Náib-Názim as the most powerful of Francis' agents. Muhammad Raza had shown his enmity to Hastings by rejecting a compromise which would still have left him at the head of the Nawáb's affairs. Nothing therefore remained, said Hastings, but 'to disarm both by the same act; by investing the Nabob himself with the management of his affairs, and divesting Mahomud Reza Cawn of the Noâbut[2].'

It was fortunate perhaps for Hastings that the home Government were too pre-occupied with more urgent matters to press their grievances against a Governor who declined to play into their hands. England was engaged in a doubtful war with her American colonies, and France in 1778 took up arms in their defence. The Court of Directors sorely resented Hastings' refusal to surrender office, and continued to find fault with most of his projects for the public good. But his influence with the Court of Proprietors could not be safely ignored; nor was it

[1] *Oleig*; Sir A. Lyall's *Warren Hastings*. [2] *Oleig*.

deemed prudent to assay the hazardous process of changing horses in mid-stream. So the Governor-General was left free for a time to fight the Company's battles in his own way.

Early in 1778 he empowered the Government of Bombay to form a new alliance with Raghuba and Sakharám Bápu of the Poona Regency against Nána Farnavís and the French. A column of Bengal troops under Colonel Leslie began its march from Kálpi in May, towards the Narbadá. Two months later Alexander Elliot, who had not long returned from England, left Calcutta for Nágpur to negotiate a subsidiary alliance with Mudají Bhonsla, the Maráthá ruler of Berár. 'Elliot is gone. A most critical service,' wrote Hastings to Impey on the 20th July, 'but likely to prove the era of a new system in the British Empire in India, if it succeeds.' Hastings hoped to secure the Rájá's friendship by favouring his claim, as a descendant of Sivají, to the titular headship of the Maráthá nation, in the room of Rám Rájá, lately dead. Before Elliot started on his mission, Mudají had already promised a free passage for Leslie's force through Berár.

Meanwhile Hastings had spared no effort in aid of the projected movement from Bombay. He had sent Governor Hornby ten lakhs of rupees, with a promise of more to follow, had agreed to help him in every way, and had urged the Madras Council to spare some of their own troops for the same purpose. But he found it no easy matter to screw Hornby's courage

to the sticking-place. The non-arrival of Sucour from Madras and the opposition of two members in his own Council, caused the Governor of Bombay to hang back at a critical moment from the enterprise which he had been the first to advocate. In his private letters to Impey, Hastings freely expressed his annoyance at the check thus suddenly offered to his own movements and designs. 'Is this ingratitude, envy, stupidity, or pusillanimity,' he asks, 'or all together?' For the moment he was puzzled what to do, beyond writing Hornby a long letter of earnest expostulation. Of ultimate success in so great an enterprise he still felt morally certain, if the people of Bombay ceased to counteract him. But for the present he would pause, so he tells Impey, 'till other lights break in upon me, either from Bombay, or perhaps from England[1].'

Early in July he learned by way of Cairo that war with France had already begun. A month earlier the news of Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga had reached Calcutta; and Francis made use of that disaster to our arms as a plea for recalling Leslie's column, 'lest it should undergo the same fate.' But Hastings was not so easily frightened into abandoning an enterprise which he had not lightly taken in hand.

His measures for meeting the new danger were boldly conceived and swiftly taken. The Madras Government were told to set about the capture of

[1] Gleig, Impey MSS. in British Museum.

Pondicherry forthwith, and empowered to make an alliance with Haidar Alí. Chandarnagar was promptly occupied by our troops. Nine battalions were added to the Bengal army, and the militia were embodied for garrison duty. A marine service was organised for the protection of the river, and two of the Company's best ships, turned into forty-gun frigates, were sent off to reinforce Sir Edward Vernon's squadron in the Bay of Bengal. Orders were issued for strengthening the defences of Baj-Baj, and the Rájá of Benares was called upon to furnish five lakhs of rupees for the maintenance of three Sepoy battalions during the war. Francis and Wheler condemned all these precautions as utterly inadequate, and suspected Hastings of 'the worst designs,' when he explained the purpose of Elliot's mission to Nágpur. Wheler in this matter was evidently guided by Francis, who could see nothing but indolence, incapacity, and bewilderment in the statesman who listened with a suppressed smile to Francis' wild talk about 'resources already exhausted, a French invasion as certain and impending, and the country incapable of resistance.

[1] Gleig, Merivale.

CHAPTER IX

The Saviour of India

1778–1784

Elliot's death in September on his way to Nágpur proved to Hastings a bitter sorrow and 'an irreparable loss.' Had the young envoy's life been spared, it is possible that Sir Gilbert Elliot, the Lord Minto of Indian history, might have been less forward in after years to vilify and impeach his dead brother's warm friend. In October Hastings was about to recall Colonel Leslie from a command for which he had shown himself unfitted, when Leslie's death cleared the way for his destined successor, Colonel Goddard, 'one of the best executive officers in the service,' who was to take his orders from Bengal alone, and was also empowered to fill Elliot's place in the negotiations with Berár [1].

Before the close of January, 1779, the new commander had carried his little army without a check from Bundelkhand across the Narbadá to Burhánpur and Surat. But the main purpose of his march had already been defeated by the disastrous blunder-

[1] Gleig.

ing of those whom he had been sent to aid. The Bombay force which had set out, full of confidence, from Panwel on the 25th November, 1778, without waiting for a junction with the Bengal column, took nearly a month in crowning the Ghâts, beyond which lay the Peshwá's capital. On the 9th of January, 1779, Egerton was encamped within eighteen miles of Poona.

But no chief of mark had joined Raghuba's standard, while the hostile Maráthás were burning the villages and cutting off the food supplies. Egerton's slowness, so fatal to an enterprise which called for dash and daring, had thoroughly disgusted the two civil commissioners who accompanied the force. On the 11th Jan. orders were issued for a swift retreat. That night the heavy guns were thrown into a pond, the stores were burned, and the retreat from Taligáon began. By next evening the troops had fought their way back to the village of Wargáon. Nothing but the steady courage of Captain Hartley and his faithful Sepoys had saved from destruction a force which, properly handled, might have carried Raghuba in triumph to Poona. But, except to a few of the bolder spirits, further retreat seemed wellnigh impossible. On the 15th January, 1779, the English leaders set their hands to the disgraceful Convention of Wargáon, which surrendered to the Peshwá all that our arms had won in Western India since 1765[1].

Neither at Bombay nor Calcutta was any respect shown to a compact which at least secured a peaceful

[1] Forrest, Mill.

retreat for our troops. Hastings ordered Goddard to propose a renewal of the Purandhar Treaty, if the Poona Government would forego all claims arising from the new Convention, and promise to admit no French troops into their country. The Maráthás, however, could not be brought to accept the only compromise by which war might be avoided. Raghuba gave his captors the slip, and made his way to Surat. Nána Farnavís demanded his surrender, and invited the Nizám and Haidar to join him in making war on the English. In January, 1780, Goddard took the field. During the next few months he captured the stately city of Ahmadábád, and twice defeated the combined forces of Tukají Holkar and Madhají Sindhia[1]. The capture of Ahmadábád was the first-fruits of a treaty by which the Gáikwár of Baroda had just agreed to divide with his English allies the fair province of Gujarát.

Before the year's end Bassein itself, for which the Company had so long been hungering, had surrendered to the victorious Goddard, while Hartley had crowned his former exploits by repulsing 20,000 Maráthás who had been pressing him hard on all sides for two days. Meanwhile another Bengal column, which Hastings had launched across the Jumna under the bold Captain Popham, drove Sindhia's men before them, and stormed the fort of Lahár on the road from Kálpi to Gwalior. In August two companies of Popham's Sepoys, with twenty English soldiers led by Captain Bruce, brother of the famous African explorer, carried by escalade

[1] Forrest.

the rock-perched fortress of Gwalior, which Sir Eyre Coote, the new member of Hastings' Council, had held it utter madness to attack.

These 'frantic military exploits,' as Francis and his allies were wont to call them, owed much of their success to the Governor-General's own resourceful energy, his masterful self-reliance, and his happy choice of competent officers. They were followed in March, 1781, by the surprise and rout of Sindhia himself at the hands of Colonel Camac, who, after a painful retreat of seventeen days through Málwá, thus suddenly checkmated his over-confident pursuer[1]. In the west, however, Goddard was less fortunate. A great gathering of Maráthá horse and foot barred his advance to Poona, while Parasrám Bháo kept harassing his rear. To march back over the Ghâts before 60,000 keen pursuers, was all that remained to him; but, thanks to his own skill and the courage of his soldiers, the return to Panwell was safely effected, after some hard fighting, before the end of April, 1781[2].

Meanwhile events had happened in Southern India which enlarged the circle of Hastings' anxieties, and thwarted his efforts to keep India closed against the French. Ever since 1772 Haidar Alí had lost no opportunity of enlarging his boundaries at the expense of his weaker neighbours. Before the end of 1778 he had pushed his conquests northward to the Kistna and

[1] Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas.*

[2] Forrest, Mill, Gleig.

westward over Malabar. More than once had his dread of the Maráthás tempted him to renew his overtures to the English at Madras. But the latter, full of their own quarrels and perplexities, gave little heed to the wooings of a neighbour whose friendship seemed to them more dangerous than his enmity.

When war with France broke out in 1778, Sir Thomas Rumbold, an old Bengal civilian, was Governor of Madras. In spite of Hastings' urgency, no serious attempt was made to conciliate the Sultán of Mysore. After the capture of Pondicherry in October, only one French settlement, Mahé on the western coast, remained in French hands. In March, 1779, that place also fell to our arms. Haidar's wrath at the capture of a seaport which some of his own troops had helped to defend, was presently inflamed by the march of a British force through a strip of his own territory into the Guntúr Sarkár, the province which Basálat Jang, the Nizám's brother, had lately rented to the Company in return for the use of a British contingent strong enough to replace his French troops.

It appears that Rumbold himself had sought to conciliate Haidar by suspending the movement against Mahé. But Sir Eyre Coote, being then at Madras on his way to Calcutta, made use of his power as Commander-in-Chief to overrule the Governor's pleadings for delay [1]. Rumbold's dealings with Basálat Jang seem at first to have been sanctioned by Hastings himself. They were justified by the conduct of the

[1] Marshman's *History of India*, vol. i. Appendix.

Nizám, who, in direct breach of former treaties, took into his own pay the French troops dismissed by his brother. The Madras Council thereupon refused to pay up certain arrears of tribute due to Nizám Alí, until he gave them full satisfaction as to this point. The Nizám, however, declined to satisfy them, and pressed for his full arrears. His grudge against the English for supporting Raghuba and making overtures to the Rájá of Berár, had lately impelled him to concoct a secret league with the Poona Regency and Haidar Alí. But some new evidence of Haidar's treachery decided the Nizám to pause betimes on the brink of an open rupture with his late friends. Meanwhile his agents succeeded in putting the Governor-General on a false scent. Hastings was led to believe that Nizám Alí's quarrel with the English concerned only his arrears of tribute and the occupation of Guntúr. His Highness at any rate deigned to be appeased by timely assurances that his tribute should be paid, and the Madras troops recalled from Guntúr.

Early in 1780 Hastings, writing to Rumbold, declared himself 'convinced from Haidar's conduct and disposition, that he will never molest us while we preserve a good understanding with him.' But the time for a good understanding had passed beyond recall with the capture of Mahé and the occupation of Guntúr. Cut off from one outlet on the western, and from his chance of another on the eastern coast, Haidar resolved to wreak a long-hoarded revenge.

Deaf to the overtures still made by Rumbold through his own agent and the Danish missionary Swartz, the fierce old Musalmán prepared in his seventy-eighth year for a campaign which might end in driving the English infidels into the sea. His own army, trained by French officers, would be supported by a great Maráthá gathering which Nána Farnavís had promised to launch against the common foe.

Shortly before his retirement in April, 1780, Rumbold had recorded his belief that Southern India would remain quiet. Even Sir Hector Munro, the head of the Madras Army, seems to have scouted the notion of real danger impending from the Mysore highlands. By the 19th of June it was known at Madras that Haidar had begun his march from Seringapatam; yet even to the end of that month, if not later, Munro and Whitehill, the new Governor, could not believe that mischief was nigh at hand.

On the 20th July, 1780, the storm burst. Haidar's myriads poured like a lava-flood through the hill-passes into the peaceful plains of the Karnatic, and the smoke of burning villages ere long told its tale of fear to the scared beholders on St. Thomas's Mount.

A whole month elapsed before Munro set out for Conjeveram with a force of 5000 men and forty guns. Colonel Baillie, with half that number, was marching thither from Guntúr. On the 10th September Baillie's little force had come within sight of the great Pagoda at Conjeveram, when it was suddenly attacked on all sides by Haidar's army, and after a long and

heroic struggle, some 300 officers and men, mostly wounded, surrendered to the ruthless victor, whose French officers alone saved them from being slaughtered where they stood. Munro himself had heard the firing, but with strange perverseness refused to stir a foot. Next evening the hero of Baxár threw his heavy guns into a tank, and, leaving much of his baggage behind him, hurried back to St. Thomas's Mount; while Haidar leisurely proceeded to waste the Karnatic with fire and sword.

Hastings' courage rose to the occasion. His old friend Barwell had sailed for England; the truce he had made with Francis in March had been lately followed by a renewal of strife. But the brave though headstrong Sir Eyre Coote promptly answered the call of manifest duty, and Wheler kept true on the whole to the pledge he had given Hastings on the eve of Barwell's departure. On the 25th September, two days after receiving the news of Baillie's disaster, Hastings carried a vote for the prompt despatch of troops and money to the seat of war in the South. He was also empowered to treat with the Maráthás through the Rájá of Berár, who, after some wavering, had just given signs of returning friendliness. He issued an order of Council removing Whitehill from his post for refusing to restore Guntúr to Basálat Jang. The Company's remittances were kept back for that season, and a war-loan was raised in Calcutta. On the 14th October, 1780, a small but well-equipped force of Europeans and Sepoys dropped down

the Húglí for Madras. A few days later Coote himself, at the Council's request, sailed from Calcutta to command the army destined to retrieve the disasters and disgrace of the past month.

About the same time Hastings ventured upon another of those 'frantic military exploits' which have helped so largely to the making of our Indian Empire, and have poured a halo of romance over so many pages of our national history. Mindful of Goddard's brilliant march in twenty days from Bundelkhand to Surat, he prepared to send another Bengal column overland to the scene of danger; a distance of 700 miles. In January, 1781, Colonel Thomas Pearse began his march from Midnapur southwards through Orissa, a province then occupied by troops from Berár, whose Rájá had just declined to mediate with the Court of Poona. But Hastings was not to be daunted by the first obstacle that crossed his path. 'Acts,' he wrote, 'that proclaim confidence and a determined spirit in the hour of adversity, are the surest means of retrieving it. Self-distrust will never fail to create a distrust in others, and make them become your enemies; for in no part of the world is the principle of supporting a rising interest and depressing a falling one more prevalent than in India[1].'

Pearse was ordered to march on at all risks, but to avoid a collision with the Berár troops. Anderson's diplomacy, backed by liberal offers of money and help

[1] Gleig.

from Hastings, who furnished three lakhs from his own coffers, materially smoothed the way for Pearse's advance. Two thousand Maráthá horse gave him the strength he needed in that arm; while Mudají himself was converted, in Hastings' words, 'from an ostensible enemy into a declared friend.'

In the Ganjám district, on the southern skirts of Purí, Pearse's column suffered cruelly for a few weeks from an outburst of cholera, that new and deadly scourge which presently in Calcutta made, wrote Hastings, 'an alarming havoc for about ten days,' of April, 1781. In spite of sickness, desertions, and a mutinous spirit among the junior officers, Pearse brought his brigade in sixty-four days to Nellore. In the Masulipatam district he was reinforced by troops from Madras, but not till the beginning of August did he join hands with the main army under the veteran Coote, whose long campaign in the Karnatic had been crowned a month before by the decisive victory of Porto Novo[1] in July 1781.

Coote had reached Madras early in November, 1780, at a moment when matters seemed at their very worst. The Government was paralysed. Haidar's cavalry had swept the country round for supplies and plunder. The people themselves were losing all faith in their powerless protectors. Arcot had fallen, and one of Haidar's generals was besieging Wandiwash, which young Flint, with 300 Sepoys, defended with the courage of a second Clive. Not

[1] Gleig, Stubbs' *History of the Bengal Artillery*.

till the middle of January, 1781, was Coote able to take the field and hurry off with a few thousand troops to the relief of Flint. The mere news of the veteran's coming frightened the besiegers away from Wandiwash. After relieving another stronghold and capturing a third, he struck off southwards for Cuddalore. But the promised supplies from Admiral Hughes's squadron were long in reaching him; and his bold rush in June at the well-stored Pagoda of Chilambaram met with a sudden and murderous repulse.

While Coote was resting his troops at Porto Novo, his wary antagonist marched swiftly back from Tanjore in hopes of barring Coote's return to Cuddalore. On the 1st July the English veteran launched his 8000 men against Haidar's 80,000 with a skill and courage worthy of his old renown. After six hours' of fighting and patient manœuvring among the sand-hills near Porto Novo, with help from one small schooner off shore, Coote struck his crowning blow; and the enemy fled, leaving thousands of dead and wounded on a field which cost the victors only 300 men. It would be hard to overrate the timeliness of a victory which saved from imminent and utter ruin the fortunes of our countrymen in Southern India[1].

The two armies clashed again in August near the scene of Baillie's disaster; but the victory of Pollilúr proved far less decisive than that of Porto Novo. On the 27th September, however, Coote surprised and

[1] Stubbs.

routed his great antagonist at Sholinghar. By this time the Dutch also were at war with England. But, thanks to Hastings' influence and Coote's strategy, bolder counsels had begun to prevail at Madras. The spendthrift ruler of the Karnatic was relieved of all control over the revenues of a province still to be administered in his name. In November, 1781, Negapatam was wrested from the Dutch by Sir Hector Munro, with the help of an English fleet led by the active Sir Edward Hughes. This was followed early in the next year by the capture of Trincomali, the finest harbour in Ceylon.

All through the year 1782 the war went on with varying fortune. The relief of Vellore by the war-worn Coote was countervailed by the slaughter of Braithwaite's column in Tanjore at the hands of Haidar's son, Tipú, during an heroic struggle prolonged for twenty-six hours. A timely reinforcement from Bombay enabled the garrison of Tellicherri, on the Malabar coast, to rout an army which had been closely besieging them for eighteen months. But Cuddalore was taken with the help of Haidar's French allies; and Sir Edward Hughes was too late to avert the recapture of Trincomali by the daring Suffren, the Nelson of France. The fleets commanded by these two great sailors never met without doing each other the utmost damage at the least apparent gain to either side [1].

[1] Auber, Mill, Stubbs, Malleson's *Final French Struggles in India.*

Meanwhile Coote's tireless energy had once more rescued Wandiwash, and beaten Haidar back from Arni in June. But the ill-timed absence of the fleet baulked his attempt to regain Cuddalore. In October his health, broken down by incessant toil, anxiety, hardship, and more than one fit of apoplexy, drove the old warrior back to Calcutta for six months' rest and change. On the Malabar coast our troops and garrisons were hard beset by Tipú, on whose myriads a few repulses made slight impression. The gallant Humberstone was nearly driven into a corner, when Tipú suddenly led off the bulk of his army eastward in hot haste to the camp at Chittúr, where his famous father died on the 7th December, 1782, weary, as he owned at last, of 'waging a costly war with a nation whom he might have made his friends, but whom the defeat of many Baillies and Braithwaites would never destroy [1].' In a fold of his turban was found a paper in which he enjoined his son to make peace with the English at once, on any terms [2].

Matters at this moment looked very dark for our countrymen in Southern India. Refugees from the wasted plains of the Karnatic were dying in the Black Town of Madras at the rate of fifteen hundred a week. The monsoon gales and the French cruisers along the eastern coasts had been playing havoc with English merchantmen and the native coasting craft. Hughes's fleet was disabled for the time by sickness and much fighting. A strong French force under the

[1] Stubbs. [2] Forrest.

renowned Bussy was hourly expected to land from Suffren's fleet at Cuddalore. Lord Macartney, the new Governor of Madras, had shown becoming energy in the hour of need; but Coote's successor, General Stuart, who had fought with credit at Porto Novo and Pollilúr, lacked some of the higher qualities which made Coote's name a household memory among his adoring Sepoys[1]. And to crown all, the Poona Government had hung back for months from ratifying the treaty by which Hastings sought to detach the Maráthás from their alliance with Mysore.

Before the end of 1781 Sindhia had agreed not only to make peace himself with the English, but to persuade the Court of Poona to make peace also on the terms proposed by Hastings. In May, 1782, the Treaty of Salbái was signed by Sindhia, and most of the Maráthá leaders. Nána Farnavís, who had accepted the treaty, still put off signing a compact which virtually pledged him to abandon Haidar altogether. But pressure from Hastings, and the news of Haidar's death, induced him also to sign before the year's end. In the following February the Peshwá's seals were affixed to a treaty by which Hastings surrendered much in order to gain a good deal more. If Sindhia recovered all his lost possessions save Gwalior, if Bassein and part of Gujarát were restored to the Peshwá, and Raghuba might look for no more help or encouragement from Bombay, the Maráthás in their turn pledged themselves to let no European traders

[1] Stubbs.

set up factories on their ground, and to 'hold no intercourse or friendship with any other European nation.' Freedom of trade between the English and the Maráthás was expressly assured, and neither party was to give any kind of aid to the enemies of the other. Raghuba himself was promised a safe asylum with Sindhia on a pension of four lakhs a year[1].

As a further reward for his timely services, Madhájí Sindhia received from Hastings a separate grant of Broach, his claim to which had first arisen out of the Wadgáon Convention. The Bombay Council vehemently deplored a stroke of policy which, in Hastings' view, would clinch his hold upon the most powerful of the Peshwá's feudatories, without involving any appreciable loss to the Company's revenues, still less to their trade[2]. The daring and ambitious chieftain who had barely escaped with life from the slaughter of Pánípat, had lately been assured that the Bengal Government would not interfere with his schemes of conquest towards Delhi; and the Rána of Gohad soon gave him a fair pretext for wresting Gwalior also out of the hands into which Hastings had transferred it[3].

Abandoned by the Maráthás and the Nizám, Tipú could still look for help to his French allies; and he prepared to carry on the war with all his father's energy, but without Haidar's consummate skill. Fortune favoured his first efforts. Haidar's stoutest foe, Sir Eyre Coote, died in April, 1783, of sheer

[1] *Forrest.* [2] Auber. [3] Malleson.

exhaustion, two days after his landing at Madras. His successor, Stuart, who had meanwhile done nothing but quarrel with the Madras Council, now wasted some precious weeks in marching against Cuddalore, where Bussy's troops had landed on the 10th April. By that time Tipú had rushed away from the Karnatic to deal with the English invaders from the west. In three months General Matthews had to surrender the ruins of Bednor on terms which his captor took care to violate. Mangalore, under Colonel Campbell, held out for nine months with heroic obstinacy against an army 100,000 strong.

Meanwhile, on the 13th June, Stuart's army, after a hard day's fighting, carried the outer line of Bussy's defences at Cuddalore. But Suffren presently grappled with Hughes at sea, and another drawn battle compelled the latter to sail off and repair his damages at Madras. A well-planned sortie from the reinforced garrison of Cuddalore was signally repulsed by the Bengal Sepoys. But Bussy still held the citadel, and Stuart's numbers were fast dwindling from sickness and short supplies, when tidings of peace made between France and England came just in time to save our arms from imminent disaster, and to rob Tipú of his last and doughtiest allies. In accordance with the Treaty of Versailles, Bussy withdrew his troops from Tipú's service, and Stuart's army returned in safety to Madras[1].

Ere long a powerful force under Colonel Fullarton

[1] Stubbs, Malleson, Marshman.

was marching up into the highlands of Mysore. In the last week of November Seringapatam itself lay within easy reach, while the fierce Sultán was pressing the siege of Mangalore. But Lord Macartney, not heeding the counsel and the commands of Hastings, had already begun to treat with Tipú for the peace which Fullarton was prepared to dictate under the walls of Tipú's capital. That officer was now ordered to fall back, in compliance with a truce which the faithless Sultán was openly breaking. Not till after the surrender of Mangalore in January, 1784, did Tipú deign to receive the envoys from Madras, in order to discuss the terms of a treaty which flattered his pride at the expense of those who had already gone near to crush him. 'You quit the reins, and how will you manage the beast?' was Swartz's remark to Fullarton when they met below the Ghâts. On the 11th March, 1784, the three English commissioners stood before the Sultán for two hours, beseeching him to sign the treaty which they held in their hands. The envoys from Poona and Haidarábád pleaded earnestly to the same effect. At last he agreed to ratify a peace which restored to each party their former possessions, and rescued more than a thousand Englishmen and nearly as many Sepoys from the slow tortures of prison life in Mysore.

CHAPTER X

The Council and the Supreme Court

1779–1781

The treaties of Salbái and Mangalore mark the turning of a new page in the history of British India. Thenceforth the English become the dominant factor in the politics of the whole Indian continent. Hastings' foreign policy, pursued through all checks and hindrances, had cleared the road for his successors, and traced out the lines along which Lord Wellesley and Lord Hastings were afterwards to work with larger means and far wider official powers. Thanks mainly to Warren Hastings' resourceful energy and all-daring strength of will, the long storm of war which had beaten from every quarter against the weak unfinished fabric of British rule in India, revealed only its latent strength for resistance under the worst shocks of adverse fortune. The Maráthá leaders knew that any further attempt to found a great Hindu empire on the ruins of old Muhammadan dynasties, would only involve them in a long and

probably a losing struggle with a power whose fighting qualities and stubborn tenacity of purpose had so often helped it to snatch a victory from the very jaws of defeat.

During those years of warfare beyond Bengal, the Governor-General had much to occupy and harass him nearer home. In 1780 Barwell sailed for England, to enjoy in the prime of his life the large fortune which he had amassed, *quocumque modo*, in India. Before his departure, Hastings had come to a truce with his old opponent on terms which enabled him to dispense with the services of his old ally. Through the agency of Sir John Day, the Company's Advocate, a kind of bargain was concluded, by which Francis pledged himself to give Hastings' policy a general support in return for a few concessions to the claims of Francis' friends.

Fowke, for instance, was to resume his former post at Benares, while a place of special dignity under the Nawáb of Bengal was to be found for Muhammad Raza. To his friends at home Hastings spoke of the new arrangement with a confidence in 'Francis' faith and honour' which after events were not to justify. Two months had hardly passed before his new friend gave signs of relapsing into his old obstructive ways. Various measures proposed by Hastings for the campaign against Sindhia were hindered or deranged on various pretexts by his perverse ally. Sir John Day once more essayed the part of mediator, but Francis *shuffled out of* his pledges, and boldly repudiated in

July the very words he had used in February. He had either a treacherous memory or his prejudices were too strong for his good faith[1].

'I am not Governor;' wrote Hastings to Sulivan—'all the powers I possess are those of preventing the rule from falling into worse hands than my own.' His opponent's timely illness left Hastings free for the moment to take his own way. Popham was not recalled, Gwalior was captured, and Camac's column marched into Málwá.

Returning health brought no improvement in Francis' temper. At last, Hastings' patience was worn out by fresh provocations. On the 15th August, 1780, in a gravely worded reply to one of Francis' Minutes, he spoke out thus: 'I do not trust to his promise of candour, convinced that he is incapable of it. . . . I judge of his public conduct by my experience of his private, which I have found to be void of truth and honour.'

This charge he made 'temperately and deliberately,' in justice to the public and himself. 'The only redress for a fraud for which the law has made no provision is'—he averred—'the exposure of it.'

A copy of the Minute containing these words had been sent to Francis the evening before. After the Council-meeting Francis challenged Hastings to fight a duel.

On the morning of the 17th they exchanged shots, and Francis was carried off the field with a bullet in his side. By the end of August he had so far

[1] Gleig, Merivale, Forrest.

recovered from his wound as to resume the war of Minutes with his fortunate rival. The paper duel went on until December, when Francis sailed homewards to brew fresh schemes of vengeance against the man whom he had thought to drive from power[1].

With his departure, Hastings once more breathed freely. After six years of conflict, he could 'enjoy the triumph of a decided victory.' The general outlook at that moment was anything indeed but bright. With 'a war either actual or impending in every quarter, and with every power in Hindustán;' with an exhausted treasury, an accumulating debt, a costly and vicious system of government, corruption rampant, trade ebbing low, and 'a country oppressed by private rapacity and deprived of its vital resources,' in order to feed the war, to give timely help to the other Presidencies, and to meet the call for remittances to England,—he had further to reckon with powerful enemies at home who were continually clamouring and striving, wellnigh successfully, for his recall. Nothing but the loyal support of a few Directors, backed by the Court of Proprietors, still kept him in his place. But Francis would be no longer at his side to torment and thwart him with all the arts of which he was a consummate master. 'In a word'—he wrote—'I have power, and I will employ it during the interval in which the credit of it shall last, to retrieve past misfortunes, to remove present

[1] Gleig, Impey, Forrest.

dangers, and to re-establish the powers of the Company and the safety of its possessions[1].'

There was no idle boasting in such language. The self-confidence which comes of self-knowledge taught Hastings to rejoice in the prospect of wielding full power for great and patriotic ends. His term of office, which expired in 1778, had been prolonged from year to year by a reluctant Ministry and a hostile Court of Directors. They knew that England, begirt with enemies, could ill afford to lose so serviceable a leader at such a time. Hastings knew it also, and the knowledge gave him strength to discharge his duty to his country and his employers in the way that seemed best to himself, without heeding the clamours of opponents in India or at home. In the absence of Francis, he could generally rely upon Wheler's vote, and Coote was already on his way to Madras. Macpherson, who was afterwards to give him trouble, had not yet arrived in Barwell's place.

Shortly before his return home, Francis had voted against a measure by which Hastings sought to make an end of the quarrel which had raged, off and on, for several years between his Government and the Supreme Court. The large and vague powers conferred upon the Judges by the Act of 1773 were sure to bring them sooner or later into awkward and dangerous collisions with the Supreme Council. For some time, thanks to the good sense of the Governor-General and two or three of the Judges, little harm ensued. In

[1] Gleig.

1776 Hastings had drawn up a scheme, heartily endorsed by his friend Impey, for removing the friction between those rival and co-equal powers. He proposed to invest the Supreme Court with 'an unlimited but not exclusive authority' over all the Company's Courts, reserving to the latter their separate jurisdiction in revenue matters and other cases which specially concerned the Government itself. But his scheme was shelved by the British Ministry; and the violence of his own colleagues thwarted his best efforts to adjust the new machinery sent out from home to the facts and conditions of our rule in India. 'It seems' —he wrote—'to have been a maxim of the Board to force the Court into extremities for the purpose of finding fault with them.'

Violence begat violence. The authority of the Crown Judges was defied at every turn, on any pretext, however hollow. Impey and his colleagues could not always forbear from asserting their lawful powers on behalf of those who claimed their protection. Hastings himself had borne witness to many 'glaring acts of oppression' committed by the Company's servants and their underlings, in the process of collecting the Company's revenue. Impey in his letters home complained bitterly of 'the vultures of Bengal,' who plundered and insulted the people under cover of decrees hastily issued by the Provincial Courts, and loudly resented all interference with their high-handed doings. The Chief Justice, seconded by *Chambers* and sometimes by Lemaistre, succeeded for

a time in keeping such interference within due bounds. If they stood between the ráyats and their alleged oppressors, they still left the Company's Courts to deal with all questions of mere revenue. Sir James Stephen has clearly shown that 'Impey's alguazils,' as Macaulay styles them, were no more to blame for what happened than the officers and agents of the Supreme Council. The real culprits were the men who framed the Act of 1773, which opened wide the door to endless conflicts between the rival powers of the Company and the Crown[1].

In the latter part of 1779 the rashness of Justice Hyde brought the long-smouldering quarrel to a violent crisis. During Impey's absence from Calcutta, Hyde issued a writ against the Rájá of Kásíjora. A sheriff's officer, with a band of Sepoys and sailors, entered the Rájá's house and sequestered all his property, including an idol, which was packed, says Hastings, 'like a common utensil in a basket.' Happily, his women and children had fled betimes to escape the crowning insult of a violated *zanána*. The Council's answer to this challenge was promptly given through the Governor-General himself. A strong party of Sepoys set off to capture the whole *posse* of Hyde's followers, and escort them back to Calcutta. Like steps were taken to protect the other Zamíndárs from the pains and penalties threatened by the Supreme Court. For several months of 1780 the whole province was thrown into a dangerous ferment.

[1] Gleig, Impey, Stephen.

A war of writs and proclamations raged with increasing violence, until at last the Judges issued a summons against the Government itself. Hastings and his colleagues, strong in their temporary union, treated the summons with contempt.

The whole machinery of civilised rule in Bengal was come in fact to a deadlock, when Hastings set it working again by means of a compromise the happiest that any statesman could have conceived. In October, 1780, he offered Impey, from whom the recent quarrels had for a time estranged him, the Presidency of the Sadr Diwáni Adálat, the Company's chief Civil Court, which Hastings had remodelled a few months before. The Chief Justice, in all sincerity, accepted the olive-branch thus opportunely held out by his old friend. This arrangement, which brought peace and order at a critical moment to Bengal, was denounced by Hastings' and Impey's enemies as a fresh crime, and was afterwards described by Macaulay as the giving and taking of a bribe. Bengal was saved, he says, and the Chief Justice became 'rich, quiet, and infamous.' But this sort of language wanders very far from the rulings of common justice and common sense.

Bengal was saved indeed, and the Chief Justice ultimately drew a fair salary in return for useful and arduous work in an office for which he was peculiarly fitted. But the infamy of the matter is the mere child of rhetorical extravagance inspired by party traditions. There was no giving or taking *of bribes*. Hastings wisely pitched upon the best

man he knew for the task of regulating the whole machinery of the Provincial Courts, which had thus far proved, 'from ignorance and corruption,' as Impey said, more of a curse than a blessing to the people; and which, under Impey's guidance, might be brought into systematic working harmony with the Supreme Court. The right to further salary for a separate office had not been questioned in the case of Clavering, nor was it questioned when Impey's colleague, Sir Robert Chambers, afterwards held an important judgeship under the Company[1].

There is no room for doubt that the new arrangement was a well-timed stroke of policy on Hastings' part. It was indeed, as Sir James Stephen allows, 'the only practicable way out of the unhappy quarrel into which the Court and the Council had been drawn by rash and ignorant English legislation.' A trained lawyer, and an upright painstaking judge, Impey drew up a plain and serviceable code of rules for the guidance of the courts thus placed under his charge. The young English district judges soon learned to mend their ignorant or careless ways, and tried to shape their judgments in accordance with the principles laid down by their new teacher. The old disgraceful broils between rival authorities disappeared under the new reign of fairly settled law, and the revenue began once more to flow freely into the Company's treasury. Impey, in the words of Sir J. Stephen, 'was the first of Indian codifiers,' and the Regulations of 1781 laid

[1] Gleig, Impey, Stephen.

the groundwork of that judicial system which has since proved on the whole a permanent blessing for the people of India. Hastings' work indeed was partially undone in 1782 by the Court of Directors, who ordered Impey's removal from his new office. But Impey's Code remained, and one purpose of Hastings' experiment was secured by an Act of Parliament defining the powers and jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. It was only in 1861, however, that his great scheme for bringing all the Company's Courts under the direct control of a Crown Judge was completely realised by the statute which invested the new High Courts in each Presidency and Province with full jurisdiction over all the country courts, civil and criminal [1].

In the midst of wars actual or impending, Hastings kept his mind open to all kinds of matters bearing on local or administrative needs. He established a Madrasa, or Muhammadan college, for the benefit of the numerous Musalmán youths in Bengal. He tried to open a friendly intercourse with Cochin-China, and he made some vigorous efforts to establish a regular line of communication with Europe by way of Egypt and the Red Sea. He took a warm interest in Major Rennell's survey work, and strongly recommended him on his return home in 1782 to the good offices of the East India Directors. Goddard, Pearse, and other skilled officers were enjoined to make careful surveys of the country they marched through. With the

[1] *Gleig*, Stephen, Chesney's Indian Polity.

grudging consent of his Council, he abolished the old system of farming out the salt revenue and placed the salt monopoly in the hands of a few trustworthy officers, on terms which secured a large yearly increase of revenue from sales effected at lowered rates. In the Customs Department also he achieved a number of reforms which placed the service under more efficient control, and freed the trade of the country from vexatious or ill-adjusted burdens[1].

Under orders from England the settlements of land-revenue had lately been carried on from year to year, by means of the Provincial Councils. In 1781 Hastings improved the process of collecting the revenue by doing away with the Provincial Councils, and transferring their powers to a committee of four of his best civil officers, including Anderson and John Shore. The new Board of Revenue were 'sworn to receive no perquisites,' and instead of a fixed salary were paid by a commission of one per cent. on the net collections. This amount was doubled on all moneys paid at once into the Calcutta Treasury. By this means the costs of collection were largely curtailed, for a swarm of middlemen no longer shared in the profits, while no more fees or perquisites were exacted from those who furnished the revenue. The new Board soon decided to relet the lands at moderate rates, on leases yearly renewable, to all those Zamíndárs who had paid their rents punctually and shown themselves capable of managing their estates without oppressing the ráyats.

[1] Gleig, Auber.

The results of their labours during the next few years paved the way for that permanent settlement which Lord Cornwallis was to carry through[1].

In Hastings' long letter of April, 1781, to his home agent, Major Scott, we may follow the workings of a remarkably clear, active, versatile brain upon the numerous questions with which at that time the great Governor had to deal. The letter travels over a wide range of subjects, from the abortive project of a Dutch treaty, the progress of the war, and the negotiations with Berár and the Nawáb of Arcot, to his own relations with Wheler and his various schemes of administrative reform. On most of these points something has been said already. His references to Wheler, who was now giving him steady support in Council, attest the easy kindliness of his own nature, and his fine sense of gratitude for services rendered by his new ally. 'I am easy and my colleague satisfied; and the public will reap the fruits of the good understanding which subsists between us.'

His efforts to simplify and expedite the conduct of public business are duly touched upon in the same letter, as well as the chief military reforms effected under his auspices by General Stibbert. There is another point on which he dwells with just pride. For many years past he had earnestly desired to 'bind men to the faithful discharge of their duty by the ties of honour and acknowledgment, to abolish fixed salaries, which are the scanty pay for dead and unprofitable labour;

[1] Ghulg, Kaye.

and to eradicate every temptation and pretext for perquisites, embezzlements, and corruption;' to reward each officer in short according to his proved deserts, and so to 'unite the interests of individuals with that of the public.' In those days the nominal pay for many offices was so small that men were tempted to eke it out by all kinds of illicit means. Hastings had no power to redistribute or enlarge the regular salaries. But he did the next best thing. Whenever he could, he substituted commissions on net receipts for the old system of fixed monthly allowances helped out by perquisites and private jobs. The new mode of remuneration was only an intermediate step to the more complete reform by means of salaries really commensurate with the work done, and the responsibilities involved. But it proved a great step forward in the right direction, and it wrought ere long a marked improvement in the moral tone of the Company's servants[1].

[1] Gleig.

CHAPTER XI

Benares and Oudh

1781–1783

The year 1781 had opened for Hastings over a troubled sea of danger, distress, and difficulty. Haidar Alí was raging about the Karnatic; Goddard and Camac were fighting the Maráthás, and French fleets were cruising in the Bay of Bengal. When he had sent Camac to look after Sindhia, shipped off Coote's soldiers for Madras, started Pearse's brigade on its march southward, and completed his bargain with the Rájá of Berár, the Governor-General found his treasury running very low indeed. Money had to be raised somehow, if British India was to be saved. In his letter to Scott, he refers briefly to the need of doing something at Benares on his way up to Lucknow. What he presently did at Benares furnished his enemies with fresh matter for the great impeachment which befel him after his return home.

Chait Singh, Rájá of Benares, was the grandson of an adventurer who had ousted his own patron from the lands he held as Zamíndár under the Mughal rule. *The adventurer's* son, Balwant Singh, the first Rájá

of Benares, became a vassal of the Nawáb Wazír of Oudh. In 1775 his fief was transferred by treaty from the Wazír to the Company, and Chait Singh paid rent for his lands to the Government of Bengal on the terms prescribed by his former suzerain. His feudal rights over the districts of Gházípur and Benares were secured to him and his heirs on payment of a yearly tribute which could not be enhanced. But, as a vassal of the Company, holding under the same kind of tenure as any other great Zamíndár, he was bound by law, custom, and written agreement, to aid his new masters with men and money in times of extraordinary need. As Lord Mansfield afterwards declared, 'the right of the British Government to demand military aid of Chait Singh in war was proved beyond possibility of question[1].' Besides the rich treasure stored up in his coffers, the Rájá had a revenue of half a million sterling, several fortresses and some thousands of armed retainers.

A first demand of five lakhs in aid of the Government was made upon him in 1778. This was paid, after some attempts at evasion. A like demand was made in the following year, and again the Rájá tried on various pretexts to shuffle out of his obligations. In the course of 1780, Hastings, acting under advice from General Sir Eyre Coote, called upon him to furnish two thousand horse for the public service[2]. The Rájá offered to furnish five hundred and as many

[1] *Debates of the House of Lords on the Evidence delivered in the Trial of Warren Hastings.* Forrest.

[2] Forrest.

matchlock-men; but even these were not forthcoming. His plea of poverty was transparently false, as false indeed as were his professions of loyalty to the British rule, at the time when he was corresponding with our enemies and raising troops secretly on his own account. Chait Singh had repeatedly put off the payment of his regular tribute; his body-guard alone was larger than the force which Hastings required of him; and the British Resident at his court complained of his rudeness and reported his secret plottings with the Oudh princesses at Faizábád. Markham, who replaced Fowke as Resident in 1781, had been charged by Hastings to treat the Rájá with all mildness and forbearant courtesy. But no entreaties could bring Chait Singh to 'make a show of obedience by mustering even five hundred horse.' Hastings lowered his demand to one thousand. But the Rájá still sent evasive answers, and never furnished a single horseman[1].

It was afterwards averred by Hastings' enemies that his policy towards Chait Singh was inspired by malice and a thirst for revenge on the man who, in 1777, had sent a messenger to congratulate Clavering on his reported accession to the post of Governor-General. But the final verdict of the Peers on this very point was far truer to the facts and likelihoods of the whole case. Francis openly gloried in repaying old grudges with ample interest. Iago himself could not have outdone him in this line. Nobody, on the

[1] Gleig, Auber, Debates of the House of Lords.

other hand, who has carefully studied Hastings' character can doubt that petty personal motives were never allowed to warp his public policy. When Hastings was first appointed Governor of Bengal, Clive wrote him a friendly letter, in which, with his wonted insight, he hinted a fear that overmuch good-nature and his easy amiable temper might sometimes lead him astray[1]. Gleig's life of Hastings teems with instances of his kindly, placable, trustful, perhaps too trustful nature. Painted portraits speak as clearly to this purport as the printed records themselves. As a matter of pure policy, Hastings resolved to make an example of his contumacious vassal, whose conduct added a new danger to the many which at that moment surrounded the Company's rule in India. A heavy fine of forty or fifty lakhs would teach the Rájá to obey his master's orders, and would help betimes to furnish an empty treasury with the sinews of war.

Chait Singh had already tried upon the Governor-General those arts which Eastern rulers have never scrupled to employ. He had sent Hastings a peace-offering of two lakhs, which Hastings at once reserved for the Company's use[2]. Presently, Hastings received an offer of twenty lakhs for the public service. But he refused to accept aught less than fifty lakhs, or half a million pounds, in quittance of all demands. In July, 1781, he set out from Calcutta, impressed, he declares, 'with the belief that extraordinary means were

[1] Malcolm's *Life of Clive.* [2] Forrest, Gleig.

necessary, and those exerted with a strong hand, to preserve the Company's interests from sinking under the accumulated weight that oppressed them.' He saw a political necessity for curbing the Rájá's 'overgrown power,' and 'making it contribute to the relief of their pressing exigencies.' At that moment he was at the end of his resources, even from loans. Every mail brought letters from Madras and Bombay pressing him for money and supplies. The pay of the troops was almost everywhere in arrear, and Hastings knew not whence to obtain so much as the eight or ten lakhs which he had pledged himself to forward to Sir Eyre Coote[1].

During his absence Wheler took charge of the Government in Calcutta[2]. Mrs. Hastings accompanied her husband as far as Monghyr, where she remained to recruit her health, while Hastings travelled on towards Benares with a small escort and no parade. At Baxár he met the recusant Rájá, attended by a large retinue. Chait Singh laid his turban as a mark of submission upon Hastings' knees. But his prayer for a private interview was haughtily rejected. On the 15th August, the day after his arrival at Benares, Hastings sent the Rájá a formal statement of the charges against him, with a demand for a full and categorical reply. Chait Singh's answer appeared 'so offensive in style and unsatisfactory in substance,' was full in fact of such transparent, or, as Lord Thurlow afterwards called

[1] *History of the Trial of* Warren Hastings, Esq. (Debrett.) [2] Forrest.

them, 'impudent' falsehoods, that Hastings ordered Markham to place him under arrest[1].

Early on the morrow Chait Singh was made a prisoner at large in his own palace, with a Sepoy guard placed outside. He sent Hastings a submissive message, but he also despatched some messengers to the royal ladies at Faizábád[2]. Meanwhile his armed retainers from Rámnagar crossed the Ganges, and, aided by the mob of the city, fell upon the Sepoy guard, who, having only unloaded muskets and empty pouches, were soon cut to pieces where they stood. Two more companies marching through the narrow streets were nearly destroyed. Chait Singh himself dropped from a terrace by a rope of turbans into a boat, and was borne in safety to his castle-palace of Rámnagar.

Thus, partly through his own rashness, but mainly through the negligence of his officers, Hastings found himself in a position of extreme danger, in a garden-house garrisoned by thirty Englishmen and a score of Sepoys. But the rabble of Benares had no leader, and troops from the nearest stations were already hurrying to the rescue of a Governor dear to the whole army. Popham brought up a battalion of his Sepoys. Morgan started without orders from Cawnpur. Trusty messengers bore Hastings' orders to Chanár, Mírzápur, and Lucknow. In the midst of anxieties sharpened by risings in Oudh and the murderous defeat of Mayaffre's rush upon Rámnagar on

[1] *Gleig, Debates,* Forrest. [2] Debates.

the 20th, Hastings quietly sent off to Colonel Muir his last words concerning the treaty he was then negotiating with Sindhia. Warned of danger to his little party, he withdrew by night to the river-fortress of Chanár. The Nawáb-Wazír made liberal offers of help, which Hastings proudly declined. In the same spirit he rejected all overtures from Chait Singh, who had mustered an army 40,000 strong within ten miles of Chanár [1].

The country around him was seething with disorder and armed rebellion. But the first days of September found Popham strong enough to open a campaign which speedily avenged the late disasters, replaced the city and province of Benares under British rule, and drove Chait Singh for shelter into his last stronghold of Bijaigarh on the heights that overlook the northern bank of the Són. The first rumour of Popham's advance sent him flying again with the bulk of his treasures into Bundelkhand. The capture of Bijaigarh in November closed a brief but brilliant campaign. The rich booty found there was forthwith divided among the captors, so that Hastings lost his only chance of replenishing his treasury at Chait Singh's expense. He contrived, however, to secure for the Company one great and permanent advantage. The Rájá's forfeit domains were transferred to his nephew on conditions which clearly defined his future rights and duties, and doubled the revenue formerly payable to the Calcutta Treasury. The re-

[1] Gleig, Auber.

conquered province became thenceforth, to adopt Hastings' words, 'as much a member' of the Company's Government 'as the zamíndárí of Bardwán [1].'

Money, however, was still wanting for the Government's immediate needs. During his stay at Chanár Hastings received a visit on the 11th September from Asaf-ud-daulá, the Wazír of Oudh. Owing partly to his own folly, but far more to the hard conditions imposed by the Francis faction in 1775, the ruler of Oudh was sinking deeper and deeper into the Company's debt. In six years that debt had risen to a million and a half, chiefly on account of the British garrisons which alone stood between the Wazír and general anarchy. The two Begams, his mother and grandmother, held large Jaghírs or grants of land in Oudh, which they governed like absolute sovereigns from Faizábád, while they retained for their own use, under a British guarantee, the rich treasure which belonged of right to Shujá-ud-daulá's son and heir. Asaf-ud-daulá knew that Hastings was in dire need of money to maintain the war, while he himself had no means of helping him from his own treasury. If Hastings would not relieve him from the burden of maintaining a British Contingent, he might perhaps agree to the Wazír's plans for raising money at the expense, among others, of his nearest relatives, the Begams of Faizábád.

The Governor-General listened to the Wazír's proposals with a readiness sharpened by his knowledge

[1] Auber, Stubbs, Gleig.

of the active part which the Begams had borne in Chait Singh's revolt. Some of their troops had taken service with the Rájá of Benares, and the country around Faizábád was openly hostile to the English and their ally.

'This town'—wrote Colonel Hannay on September 8, 1781, from Faizábád—'has more the appearance of belonging to Chait Singh than the Vizier. The Begams have placed guards to prevent any of my people going to the bázár in it. Within these few days Shaik Khán, with near 1000 horse and foot, has marched from hence to Benares.' A few days later Hannay reported that the country from Faizábád to the Ganges was 'in the utmost ferment,' and that numbers of people, horse and foot, were daily sent to Chait Singh from Faizábád. Middleton himself and every English officer employed in Oudh reported or testified to the same effect[1].

On the 19th September, 1781, Hastings signed the Treaty of Chanár, which relieved the Nawáb-Wazír from the chief part of his military obligations, and empowered him to resume at will all the jaghírs within his realm. Fifty-five lakhs were afterwards paid into the Calcutta Treasury, with a promise of twenty more to follow. Six days later the Wazír left Chanár resolved, with Hastings' virtual consent, not only to resume the Begams' jaghírs, but to reclaim for himself the paternal treasure locked up in the palace at Faizábád[2].

[1] Forrest. [2] Mill, Auber, Gleig.

According to Burke, Sheridan, and Macaulay, the Wazír and the Governor-General joined in a plot to rob two ladies, one of whom was 'parent to one of the robbers.' As a matter of fact, the robbery had been committed in 1775 by the parent upon her son, through the intervention of the British Resident. In spite of Hastings' solemn protests, the Supreme Council thought fit to confirm the unrighteous bargain which their agent had forced upon the young Wazír. Since then Hastings had reluctantly but loyally stood by an agreement contrary to justice, policy, and good faith[1]. He now saw his way to place matters on a fairer footing. The Begams, he held, had clearly forfeited all right both to their jaghírs and the treasure from which they drew the means of plotting against their own sovereign and his English allies. So far from conniving at an act of robbery, he had pledged the Wazír at Chanár to grant his kinswomen liberal pensions in exchange for the military fiefs which they had no lawful right to hold[2].

After his return to Lucknow, the Wazír's courage began to fail him. His mother, the chief Begam, was a woman of strong mind and violent temper, and Asaf-ud-daulá found many excuses for delaying the fulfilment of his late compact. But Hastings pinned him to his promises by threatening to withdraw his Resident and the British troops from Oudh. Middleton, who had once more replaced Bristow at Lucknow, was ordered to stand no more shuffling from the weak-

[1] *Forrest.* [2] Debates of the House of Lords.

kneed ruler of that kingdom. Before the close of 1781 Hastings had learned enough to convince him that the Begams deserved small mercy at their kinsman's hands. It was shown by evidence which afterwards satisfied his judges in the House of Lords that they had helped Chait Singh with men and money, and fomented insurrection against their own sovereign. In order that the evidence worked into his 'Narrative' of the late rebellion might be duly attested, and that Middleton might be fully informed of his views and wishes, he persuaded Impey, who had come to see him at Benares in October, to extend his journey to Lucknow. Impey accordingly went thither, had a talk with the Resident, and took a number of affidavits duly signed before him on oath[1]. It is strange to think that so harmless a proceeding should afterwards have been charged against him as a crime; still stranger that in this matter Macaulay should have followed in the wake of Sheridan and Burke.

Before Hastings got back to Calcutta in February, 1782, the Wazír had taken heart to fulfil his promises made at Chanár. The jaghírs were resumed in spite of an armed resistance. His British troops entered the palace of Faizábád, and the two eunuchs who managed the Begams' affairs were compelled by scanty fare and confinement in chains to disgorge some of the wealth stored up by the late Wazír. The money thus obtained was remitted to Calcutta, and the balance still due to the Company was ere long made

[1] Stephen, Impey.

good from the revenues of the resumed jaghírs. After some months of further bondage, the cruelty of which was absurdly exaggerated by Hastings' accusers, the eunuchs in December were set free, under peremptory instructions from Hastings himself. The Begams, who had suffered no indignities and very little discomfort, lived to send Hastings 'strong letters of friendship and commiseration' during his trial before the House of Lords. The younger lady was 'alive and hearty, and very rich,' when Lord Valentia visited Lucknow in 1803; and one of the eunuchs on the same occasion was reported as being 'well, fat, and enormously rich[1].'

Hastings' conduct throughout these transactions, as well as his treatment of Chait Singh, was condemned by the Court of Directors, and furnished grounds for one of the charges on which he was afterwards impeached and acquitted. The despoiling of the Begams would give his enemies a new handle for violent invective, and commentators a theme for endless debate. In the eyes of Burke and his followers whatever Hastings did or sanctioned was sure to be wrong. But to judge his acts by the torchlights of party prejudice and passion would be as unfair as to judge them solely by the ethical and political standards of our own day. Apart from the question of public needs, he had no reason to doubt that the Begams had been 'levying war against the Company,' besides being a constant danger to the peace of Oudh. The

[1] *Gleig*, Impey, Wilson's Notes on Mill.

resumption of their jaghírs was a stroke of sound policy, which had been only too long deferred. The seizure of the treasure was justified by the Begams' conduct, both towards the English and their own sovereign. As for the eunuchs, it seems absurd to hold Hastings accountable for 'tortures' which were never inflicted, and for indignities of which, at the time, he never heard. Oudh was still in effect an independent State ruled by its own sovereign; and Hastings deemed it no part of his duty to meddle with every detail of the measures adopted by his ally.

Had Hastings been half as greedy and unscrupulous as his enemies loved to paint him, he might have returned home 'rich beyond the dreams of avarice;' rich enough to determine the vote of the House of Commons on any question affecting himself. He would certainly have kept for his own use the ten lakhs of rupees which Asaf-ud-daulá had presented to him at Chanár. But instead of pocketing this gift, he assured the Court of Directors that the whole sum would be expended in their service, unless they allowed him, as a special mark of their approval, to keep it for himself. The Directors took no notice of his suggestion. Although he accounted for every rupee of the money, the fact of its acceptance formed one of the charges on which Hastings was to be impeached by the Commons and acquitted by the Lords[1].

[1] Gleig, *Debates.*

CHAPTER XII

The Crowning of a Great Career

1781–1785

Meanwhile in England fresh storms were brewing against the Governor whose achievements in the far East were the one bright spot in the picture of England's uncertain struggle with a world in arms. The rancour of Francis, who might have sat for Milton's Belial or Pope's 'familiar toad,' was doing its poisonous work. Burke's fury against the Governor-General was inflamed not only by the arts of Francis, but by letters from his brother William, then Agent with the Rájá of Tanjore, and a partisan of Lord Macartney in his frequent quarrels with the Supreme Council.

In 1782 Lord North's Ministry was replaced by that of Rockingham, in which Burke's party had a leading voice. With the help of Dundas, they carried through the Commons a vote of censure on Hastings; and the Directors slavishly proceeded to recommend his recall. But in July a new Ministry under Lord Shelburne came into power, and the Court of Proprietors, once more rallying to the cause of their old favourite, *steadily* refused to make him a scapegoat

for other men's shortcomings. The vote for recall which had passed the Board on the 22nd October was therefore rescinded on the 31st. The Court of Proprietors plainly taxed the Directors with throwing upon Hastings all the blame for measures arising mainly out of their own commands. They declared that Hastings was doing his best to bring about a general peace, that his conduct of the war against Haidar and the French merited the warmest approbation, and that his recall at so critical a moment would be 'evidently injurious to the interest of the Company and the nation[1].'

Early in 1783 Impey received the order for his recall as voted by the Commons in the previous May. This was another shaft from Francis' quiver. To the strictures of the India House upon his own conduct Hastings replied in language of indignant yet lofty scorn. He had been arraigned before the people of England for 'acts of such complicated aggravation that, if they were true, no punishment short of death could atone for the injury which the interest and credit of the public has sustained in them.' To every statement made on behalf of Chait Singh he offered a flat denial. 'The man whom you have thus ranked among the princes of India will be astonished when he hears of it—at an elevation so unlooked for.' He taunted the Directors with becoming the Rájá's advocates against their own interests. In spite of the difficulties which, thanks to the home powers, had so

[1] Auber, Oleig.

long beset him, he pleased himself with the hope that, in future records of the Company's rule, 'this term of its administration will appear not the least conducive to the interests of the Company, nor the least reflective of the honour of the British name.' Gratitude to his masters had hitherto kept him faithful to his trust. But now it only remained for him to declare his intention to resign their service as soon as he could do so without prejudice to their affairs. Should they insist on ordering him to restore Chait Singh to his former position, he would instantly give up his station and their service [1].

The challenge thus directly hurled in March, 1783, was not to be promptly taken up. Chait Singh remained in comfortable exile at Gwalior, and Benares became a British province. Hastings served on for yet two years, chafing often under fresh annoyances, but patiently working out his schemes for the general good. At the council-board he was constantly opposed by Macpherson and Stables, and could not always reckon upon Wheler's vote. The Governor of Madras rebelled against every order received from Calcutta, and inflamed the minds of the Directors with angry complaints against their Governor-General. Hastings' agents at Lucknow and Benares were again replaced by friends of Francis and nominees of the India House. At home Lord Shelburne's Ministry, if less unfriendly than its predecessor, was too weak to give him any effectual support, and in April its place was taken by

[1] Auber.

the Coalition Ministry of Lord North and Fox, in which room was made for Francis' tool and mouthpiece, Edmund Burke.

Such a conjunction boded ill both for Hastings and the Court of Directors. But King George himself was alive to the folly of recalling a Governor whose work in India was still to complete; and his intense dislike to the great Whig leader and all his party helped to ensure the failure of Fox's India Bill, which aimed at transferring the whole government of India from the Company to seven Directors appointed by the Ministry, and removable only upon an address from Parliament. In spite of Burke's eloquence and a majority in the House of Commons, the bill was thrown out by the Lords in December, and the year 1784 opened on a new Ministry, headed by William Pitt[1].

In November, 1783, the Court of Proprietors had carried, all but unanimously, a vote of thanks to Hastings for his many and invaluable services. To him and his friends the outgoing Ministry gave nearly all the credit for their defeat. Among the new Ministers he had several warm friends, and hardly one enemy, except Dundas. Even Dundas, who had steadily denounced his foreign policy, seemed for the moment dazzled by the latest proofs of Hastings' success in the fields of war and diplomacy. 'I once thought'—were his words to Major Scott—'that he could not make peace with the Maráthás; but I have been mistaken. His relief and support of the Karnatic,

[1] Oleig, Auber, Sir G. C. Lewis's *Administrations of Great Britain.*

his improvement of the revenues of Bengal, his spirit and activity, claim every degree of praise that I can bestow upon him, and every support that his Majesty's ministers can afford him[1].'

In 1783 Hastings had fairly recovered from a serious illness which befel him in the previous year, delaying for some months the progress of his administrative labours. By this time the puppet Emperor of Delhi was turning eyes of appeal towards the rulers of Bengal. With a view to giving him what help he could, Hastings sent two English envoys to his court. Their reports convinced him of Sháh Alam's preference for an English alliance to the kind of service which Mádhaji Sindhia was prepared to offer him. But the Governor-General, hampered by timid or opposing colleagues, found that he could not interfere to any good purpose; and Sindhia, in the following year, was ruling as Sháh Alam's chosen lieutenant over the provinces that still belonged in name to the House of Bábar[2].

Lord Macartney's insolent defiance of the Supreme Council's orders, especially with regard to the Nawáb of Arcot and the negotiations with Tipú, would have been cut short by his suspension from office, had Hastings' colleagues seconded their chief. It tried his patience sorely to see Fowke mismanaging affairs at Benares; while Bristow's unauthorised meddling at Lucknow gave just offence to the Wazír's ministers, and upset all Hastings' schemes for the better govern-

[1] Gleig. [2] Mill, Keene.

ment of Oudh. His colleagues supported Bristow against the Nawáb-Wazír. Wheler at last gave in, and in January, 1784, Bristow was recalled. In the middle of the next month Hastings set out on his last tour up-country to Benares and Lucknow [1].

By that time his stanch friend Impey was on his way home to defend himself triumphantly before the Commons from all the charges which Burke and Francis brought against him. By that time also he had taken a fond farewell of Mrs. Hastings; whose failing health had caused him deep anxiety for many months past. To part, even for a year, from one who, in Gleig's words, had long been 'his friend, his confidant, his solace, his supreme delight,' was for Hastings a bitter trial. He had hoped to share her homeward voyage; but duty held him a year longer to his thankless post. The peace with Tipú was still to settle; the quarrel with Macartney still raged; a famine had broken out in Upper India which threatened to reach Bengal, and the affairs of Oudh called for his personal supervision.

At Patná he met his kinsman, Captain Turner, whom he had despatched a year before on a mission to the infant Lama of Tibet. On his journey from Baxár to Benares, he was saddened by frequent traces of long prevailing drought, and 'fatigued' by piteous complaints from the sufferers who thronged his path. In the city of Benares he found matters well ordered under the control of Muhammad Raza Khán, while the surrounding

[1] Gleig, Forrest.

districts had suffered not more from famine than official misrule. He forwarded to his Council a well-laid plan for reforming the local administration[1]. His stay at Lucknow extended from April to the latter part of August. He succeeded in rescuing the Wazír's finances from utter wreck, and placed the government in the hands of two able and trustworthy ministers. At Faizábád he made friends of the Begams by restoring to them a part of their Jaghírs.

In September Hastings sailed down the rain-swollen Ganges to Benares, accompanied by the young Sháhzáda, Prince Jawán Bakht, who had fled from Delhi to Lucknow in quest of aid for his father from the perils that encompassed him. Hastings took a fancy to his youthful visitor and a friendly interest in his story. But he could only advise the prince to return home and look to Sindhia for the protection his father needed from the fights and plottings within his own capital, and from the encroachments of Sikh invaders on Mughal ground[2]. His letters to his wife at this period are full of matter likely to interest one who had so long shared his public cares as well as his private experiences. Of his way of life he writes, 'I eat sparingly; I never sup, and am generally in bed by ten. I breakfast at six. I bathe with cold water daily, and while I was at Lucknow, twice a day.' If a heavy burden still weighed upon his mind, the business which now occupied it was light, uniform, 'and with little vexation.' And, unless everybody was conspiring

[1] Forrest. [2] Forrest, Gleig.

to deceive him, 'all ranks of people were pleased, not because I did good but because I did no ill [1].'

The news of Wheler's death quickened his return to Calcutta. At Benares, where he parted from the Shahzáda, the bare brown fields were now green with the promise of a rich harvest, and his measures for reforming abuses were already bearing some fruit. On the 4th November he reached Calcutta, where a scolding letter from the India House awaited him. This was soon followed by tidings of Pitt's India Bill, which placed the Company as a political power under the direct control of a Ministerial Board. Hastings felt that some passages of Pitt's speech in support of this measure were virtually levelled at himself. He was 'literally sick of suspense,' and a further study of the Bill convinced him that his resignation was 'expected and desired.' As soon as Macpherson should pledge himself to respect the new arrangements made with the ruler of Oudh, he would prepare for his homeward voyage. 'I will wait for no advices' —he wrote to Mrs. Hastings—'They have given me my freedom and opened the road to my happiness.'

One of his last acts as Governor-General was to review the troops which had fought so bravely under Colonel Pearse against Haidar Alí and his son. As he rode bareheaded, in a plain blue coat, along the diminished ranks of Sepoys dressed in motley and patched uniforms, the cheers that greeted him showed the strength of his hold on the affections of the

[1] Gleig.

Bengal army. Swords of honour were bestowed on Pearse and two of his officers; and the Colonel, whom Hastings was 'proud to call his friend,' was requested publicly to thank his officers and men for their past services. Nor were Goddard's soldiers forgotten. Every Sepoy who had served in Southern or Western India received a medal, and to every soldier, white or black, in either army was granted an increase of his monthly pay[1].

In the last year of his rule Hastings had helped to found the Asiatic Society, whose first President was Sir William Jones, the next Chief Justice of Bengal. Warren Hastings was the first Englishman who persuaded the Pandits of Benares to unlock the treasures of Sanskrit literature, and to aid him in codifying the Hindu laws. He encouraged scholars like Halhed, Anderson, and Hamilton, to translate and arrange the current law-books, Hindu and Muhammadan. Of art, as well as science and learning, he showed himself a liberal and discerning patron. Imhoff was but the first of several painters for whom his bounty or his influence secured a lucrative career in the East. Zoffany painted his 'Last Supper' for the new church of St. John in Calcutta, the first stone of which was laid by Wheler, as Hastings' deputy, in April, 1784[2].

The last few weeks of his stay in India were spent in working up all arrears of public business, in

[1] Stubbs.

[2] *Gleig*, Newman's *Handbook to Calcutta*.

devising new schemes of retrenchment and reform, in receiving farewell addresses, and in writing farewell letters to all the native chiefs and princes connected with his Government. On the 1st February, 1785, he handed over the keys of the Treasury and Fort William to his second in Council, Sir John Macpherson. He took leave of his colleagues in words of unfeigned kindliness and large hope. A crowd of friends and admirers greeted him as, for the last time, he entered his house at Alipur, now the abode of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. That afternoon three intimate friends accompanied him to the Ghát, and went with him down the river to Kijri. On the 8th February, 1785, they left him on board the *Berrington*, which bore him homewards to the land he had not seen for sixteen years.

The foregoing pages have shown what kind of work Warren Hastings wrought for his masters during the thirteen years of his rule in Bengal. In 1772 he found that large and fertile province sunk in general wretchedness and disorder. Outside the trading factories and the British cantonments chaos reigned supreme. Law and justice and civil order were words of little meaning. The strong everywhere preyed upon the weak; the mass of the people were oppressed and plundered alike by the Nawáb's own officers and by the servants of an English trading-company. Bands of robbers and gangs of revenue agents carried off what war and famine had spared. The Nawáb's *government* was powerless for any good purpose,

while the sway of the Company rested on no rules except those of the counting-house and the barrack. And they had no scheme of foreign policy fit to cope with the dangers that surrounded Bengal.

All this Hastings set himself to amend or to form anew. The changes wrought by his domestic and his foreign policy mark a very important epoch in our Indian history. Before his time no part of British India possessed a government worthy of the name. His genius and energy first gave clear and permanent shape to what had been a mere *rudis indigestaque moles*. The administrative system which he built up in those thirteen years remains essentially the system of the present day. As he said himself in his written defence before the Lords, 'Every division of official business, and every department of Government which now exists in Bengal, . . . are of my formation. The establishment formed for the administration of the revenue, the institution of the courts of civil and criminal justice in the province of Bengal and its immediate dependencies, the form of Government established for the province of Benares . . . were created by me. Two great sources of revenue, opium and salt, were of my creation. . . . To sum up all, I maintained the provinces of my immediate administration in a state of peace, plenty, and security, when every other member of the British empire was involved in external war or civil tumult[1].'

Hastings had not only given a strong and stable

[1] *History of the Trial of Warren Hastings.*

government to Bengal; he had gradually raised the Company into a commanding place among the chief political powers in India. He made no conquests; but his treaties and his subsidiary system paved the way for the final overthrow or defeat of every power that sought to hinder the growth of our Eastern empire.

Another passage from the paper already quoted sums up the main achievements of his rule:—

'The valour of others acquired; I enlarged, and gave shape and consistency to the dominion which you hold there; I preserved it; I sent forth its armies with an effectual, but economical hand, through unknown and hostile regions, to the support of your other possessions; to the retrieval of one from degradation and dishonour, and of the other from utter loss and subjection. I maintained the wars which were of your formation or that of others, *not of mine*. I won one member of the great Indian Confederacy from it [the Nizám] by an act of seasonable restitution; with another [Mudají Bhonsla] I maintained a secret intercourse, and converted him into a friend; a third [Sindhia] I drew off by diversion and negotiation, and employed him as the instrument of peace. . . . I accomplished a peace, and I hope an everlasting one, with one great State [the Maráthás], and I at least afforded the efficient means by which a peace, if not so durable, more seasonable at least, was accomplished with another [Mysore].'

When we remember under what conditions all this

work was accomplished by a man who had had no special training for such tasks, who was continually hampered by hostile or uncertain colleagues, by fractious or untrustworthy subordinates, by half-hearted, weak, or treacherous allies, by a captious and distrustful Court of Directors, by unsparing assailants in the House of Commons, and by Ministers who used him as a mere pawn in their political game, we can only wonder the more at the versatile genius, the patient energy, the dauntless self-reliance, the unyielding grasp, the stubborn yet pliable strength of will, which enabled him, often single-handed, in spite of all hindrances, to bring so many of his schemes for the general good to a prosperous issue. Even Macaulay, who finds him wanting in respect for the rights and in sympathy for the sufferings of others—which is not true—pays all due homage to his great qualities as statesman and ruler, and bears admiring witness to 'his dauntless courage, his honourable poverty, his fervent zeal for the interests of the State, his noble equanimity, tried by both extremes of fortune, and never disturbed by either.'

For official industry Hastings can hardly have been surpassed by Dalhousie himself. In official courage he seems to stand alone, because none of his successors had to encounter all the trials and disadvantages which fell to his lot. That he made many mistakes during his long rule, through ignorance or imperfect information; that he changed his opinion and was sometimes biassed by his feelings; that he

sometimes judged erroneously and acted wrongly, is only to admit, with Horace Wilson, that he was like other men. He was not, however, as Wilson has well said, 'judged like other men; but every mistake or misconception, every hasty impression, every fluctuating purpose, every injudicious resolution, was hunted out, made public, and arrayed in evidence against him[1].' Few statesmen indeed have paid so heavily for the sins of other men, or have suffered such cruel and prolonged injustice from the passions and prejudices, both personal and political, of their own age. In view of the evils wrought even now by party rancour and political prejudice, it is easy to understand how Hastings' pre-eminent services to his country came to be rewarded, in his own words, 'with confiscation, disgrace, and a life of impeachment.' And much of the evil wrought by the malignity of Francis and the eloquence of Burke and Sheridan still lives in the 'splendid romance' woven by Macaulay out of documents which a calmer and more careful workman would have conned with very different eyes.

[1] Wilson's *Notes on Mill.*

CHAPTER XIII

Hastings in England

1785–1818

On the 13th June, 1785, Hastings landed at Plymouth, after a voyage comparatively short and wholly uneventful, except for a brief stay at St. Helena. He had employed much of his time in writing a narrative of the last three months of his rule, and in putting some odes of Horace into a modern English dress. His free yet scholarly rendering of the 'Otium divos rogat' shows the skill of a graceful versifier in adapting the old poet's thoughts to his own experiences. The following stanza, which tells its own tale, may be taken as a fair sample of his literary craftsmanship:—

> 'No fears his peace of mind annoy,
> Lest printed lies his fame destroy,
> Which labor'd years have won;
> Nor pack'd committees break his rest,
> Nor avarice sends him forth in quest
> Of climes beneath the sun.'

His first care of course was to rejoin his beloved wife, who had been graciously received at Court by

the austere Queen Charlotte. Her husband found himself equally honoured by the King, while one at least of the Ministers, Lord Chancellor Thurlow, greeted him as an old friend. Even Dundas, who had become President of the new Board of Control, received him with all apparent favour. The Court of Directors unanimously thanked him for his eminent services. He found himself in short, to use his own words, 'everywhere and universally treated with evidences, apparent even to my own observation, that I possess the good opinion of the country.' If any shadow of coming trouble ever crossed his path, if he still at times regretted that his wife had not become a mother, the man's buoyant, hopeful spirit soon passed out into the sunshine of present happiness and of dreams that might some day be fulfilled. One dream of his childhood was fulfilled three years later, when the greater part of Daylesford fell by purchase into his hands. The vast fortune which his foes accused him of having extorted from the princes and people of India amounted only to £80,000, besides half that sum settled upon his wife. For a Governor-General of eleven years' standing this was a very modest saving from an income of £25,000 a year[1].

Hastings' dreams of peace from persecution and of some public reward for his past services were soon to be rudely dispelled. In June, 1785, Burke had proclaimed to the House of Commons his intention to 'make a motion respecting the conduct of a gentleman

[1] Gleig, *Debates of the House of Lords.*

just returned from India.' In the following February he carried out his threat by moving for copies of various papers bearing on the case in hand. In spite of rebuffs from the Ministry, he presented in April a list of the charges which, with Francis' help, he had already framed against the Indian Verres, the modern Nero steeped in the blood of a helpless nation. A long answer in defence, hastily written at five days' notice, and read out in part by Hastings himself before the Commons, was heard with a deference which its author mistook for approval. 'It instantly turned all minds to my own way,' he wrote to a friend in India[1].

From this delusion he was awakened in June, when Burke entered on his first charge—the hiring out of British soldiers 'for the purpose of extirpating the innocent and helpless people' of Rohilkhand. On this charge Burke and his friends were decisively beaten. On the 13th Fox opened the charge of wanton cruelty and gross extortion practised by Hastings on the Rajah of Benares. Pitt's speech on this occasion took both parties by surprise. After a long and able defence of Hastings' conduct on the main points at issue, he declared his intention to vote for the impeachment, because Mr. Hastings had clearly 'intended to punish Chait Singh with too much severity.' The most probable reason for so sudden a change of front was political expediency alone. Hastings was the Jonah whose presence

[1] Gleig.

endangered the ship of State. Many of Pitt's followers flocked into the same lobby with those of Fox and Burke, and the hostile vote was carried by a majority of thirty-nine.

In February, 1787, the charge concerning the Oudh Begams was opened by Sheridan in a long speech, whose dazzling eloquence played over a rich field of falsehoods, fallacies, exaggerations, and half-truths. Pitt joined in the attack upon Hastings, whose guilt was affirmed by a majority of nearly three to one. The work of accusation went on so triumphantly, that the Commons on the 10th May decided to impeach Warren Hastings for high crimes and misdemeanours at the bar of the House of Lords. Thither on the 21st the great Governor was brought by the Sergeant-at-Arms to hear the articles of his impeachment read out by Burke. A committee of twenty commoners, headed by Burke himself, was appointed to conduct the trial of a man who deserved the highest honours that his country could have bestowed. The real author of the impeachment, Philip Francis, was very properly excluded, in spite of Burke's pleadings, from a place upon the committee. But he was allowed to attend their meetings, and to aid them liberally with the fruits of his misapplied talents and inventive spite.

The remainder of that year Hastings spent in preparations for his defence. Three eminent barristers, Law, Dallas, and Plumer, worked zealously on his *behalf in* concert with the faithful Major John Scott,

and his friends in India busied themselves with collecting testimonials and 'other creditable vouchers,' from the very people whom he was said to have plundered and oppressed. On the 13th February, 1788, began in Westminster Hall the famous trial whose opening scene inspired one of the most splendid passages that ever came from Macaulay's pen. Into this scene Hastings entered in 'a plain, poppy-coloured suit of clothes[1].' His small, spare figure was still upright, and his bearing showed a due mixture of deference and dignity. A high forehead, with arched eyebrows overhanging soft, sad eyes, which presently flashed defiance on his accusers[2], a long sensitive nose that contrasted with the firmer lines of his mouth and chin, and the calm pallor of an oval face framed in brown waving hair,—all seemed to harmonise with the leading traits of his character and the chequered story of his past life.

Two days were spent in reading out the twenty charges and the defendant's replies to each. Burke's opening speech on the whole case lasted through four days, and drove some of his hearers into hysterical fits with its revolting details of imaginary crimes and atrocities almost beyond belief. The speaker's long-winded yet soul-stirring eloquence drew forth some words of praise even from the hardheaded Thurlow, and made Hastings fancy himself the monster which Burke was painting him in a rich variety of phrase. But there were some at least of Burke's audience

[1] Gleig. [2] Seeley's *Fanny Burney and her Friends*.

whom all that flow of turbid oratory left finally masters of themselves. Fanny Burney, for instance, has vividly described the different stages of feeling through which she passed, from the highest admiration of the orator's varied powers, through some moments of sheer despair for the cause of Hastings, down to the perfect composure with which she followed Burke's later comments and tirades, when his charges became more general and his violence more and more uncontrolled. Then indeed, 'there appeared more of study than of truth, more of invective than of justice, and in short so little of proof to so much of passion, that in a very short time I began to lift up my head, my seat was no longer uneasy, my eyes were indifferent which way they looked or what object caught them;' until at last she found herself 'a mere spectator in a public place,' looking calmly about her with opera-glass in hand[1].

The next sittings of the Court were taken up in discussing points of procedure, in hearing the speeches of Fox and Grey on the Benares charge, in reading documents, examining witnesses for the prosecution, and listening to the Managers' last words. In the middle of April one of the Managers opened the charge concerning the Begams, which was summed up early in June by Sheridan in a long, sarcastic, highly glittering speech, that ended by his sinking gracefully into Burke's arms. Thereupon the Court, having sat for thirty-five days, adjourned to the following year.

[1] Oleig, Debrett, Morley's *Burke*.

The King's illness in autumn led to stormy debates on the Regency, and the trial could not proceed before April, 1789. After seventeen sittings taken up with the third charge, which concerned the receipt of presents, the Lords again adjourned. In 1790 Parliament was dissolved, and the great trial made very little progress. In the following May the Managers went through the charge of corruption, and the remaining charges were dropped by general consent. That year's sittings closed with the reading of Hastings' defence; a powerful and temperate statement of the facts which went to prove not only the greatness of his public services, but his entire innocence of the wrong-doing laid to his charge. On the latter point he laid particular stress, disclaiming and protesting against the notion that he had dwelt upon his merits and services merely as 'a set-off against confessed offences.' If he was guilty of those offences let him be convicted, he said, and punished according to his deserts. 'No, my Lords; I have troubled you with this long recital, not as an extenuation of the crimes which have been imputed to me, but as an argument of the impossibility of my having committed them[1].'

So strong indeed was Hastings' belief in his own innocence, that he begged his judges, if it so pleased them, to pass their decision at once upon the case as it then stood. But more than three years had yet to elapse before that decision was pronounced. Two of

[1] Debrett.

those years were spent in hearing the case for the defence, which Law, the future Lord Ellenborough, opened with a long, masterly, and temperate speech, that made his name, says Brougham, both as a lawyer and a speaker, and soon raised him to 'the highest walks of the bar.' At last, in 1794, the Managers replied upon the several charges; Lord Cornwallis, fresh from his successful rule in India, gave timely evidence in Hastings' favour; and Burke finally summed up the case against him in a violent speech nine days long, which exhausted the whole vocabulary of licensed vituperation. It was in fact one prolonged yell of foul-mouthed fury, of which Law solemnly affirmed in the House of Commons, that 'the English language did not afford expressions more gross, violent, abusive, and indecent than those which the Manager had used.' The best passages in that speech, he added, were but 'sublime and beautiful nonsense; at other times his expressions were so vulgar and illiberal, that the lowest blackguard in a bear-garden would have been ashamed to utter them[1].' Burke's great mind was clearly losing its balance with the utter loss of what temper he had ever possessed.

In February, 1795, the Lords proceeded to discuss in committee the bearing of the evidence on each charge. Thurlow's old place on the Woolsack was then filled by Lord Loughborough; but the late Chancellor still took the lead by right of long experience and sound judgment in the closing business of

[1] Debrett.

that long trial. By the end of March the 'immense quantity of rubbish and trash,' as Thurlow called it, had been sifted of 'the very little evidence' it contained, and on the 23rd April the final verdict was proclaimed with due solemnity in the great Hall where Hastings had first been solemnly impeached. Of the peers who had sat through the whole trial twenty-nine only remained. On the first two articles of charge twenty-three declared Hastings 'Not Guilty.' On two charges of corruption he was unanimously acquitted, and on the remaining counts the adverse votes ranged from two to five. Eighteen of the twenty-nine, including Lord Thurlow and Archbishop Markham, acquitted him on every count, while Lord Mansfield voted against him on one count only, which involved a question of law rather than justice[1].

After seven years of cruel suspense the great Proconsul had won a victory which pleased the public, but left him in point of worldly fortune a ruined man. He had no pension, he had been living up to his income, and the legal costs for his defence exceeded £70,000. For him there was small chance of public office under any ministry led by Pitt or Fox. Pitt curtly declined to aid him in obtaining money from the public purse. The Directors and Proprietors of the Company he had served so well, concurred in voting him a handsome pension and a sum of money for his legal expenses. But the Board of Control withheld their sanction, and the Directors finally granted

[1] Debrett, *Debates*.

him a pension of £4,000 for twenty-eight years and a half from the date of his return home, with a loan of £50,000 free of interest. Their bounty enabled him to live on at Daylesford in dignified ease, amid such happiness as good health, a good conscience, a loving wife, the company of books and old friends, regular exercise, and the varied pursuits of a country squire could bestow. Congratulatory letters and addresses from nearly all parts of India, from people of all ranks, classes, creeds, and colours belied the persistent calumnies of his impeachers, and consoled him, as he declared, 'for the want of money to throw away on the luxuries of a farm and a greenhouse, and on the tax of a town residence[1].'

The quiet tenour of life at Daylesford was varied by yearly trips to London with his wife, and by visits to the Impeys at Newick or to some other of his old friends, who in their turn became his guests. At home he busied himself with breeding horses, trying new kinds of food upon his cattle and new methods of growing barley, with laying out and cultivating his gardens, and with many attempts to raise fruits and vegetables from Indian seeds. He kept up his old Indian habits of early rising and cold bathing. After an hour spent in his library he would breakfast there by himself on bread and butter and tea which was never watered twice. When Mrs. Hastings and her guests had sat down later to their breakfast, he would read them some of his own verses, or a passage from

[1] Gleig.

some favourite author, or news from the journals of the day. The reading was relieved by interludes of pleasant talk in which every one took his share. For Hastings was ever a kindly and courteous host, who pleased himself in trying to please his company. He had some turn for epigram and repartee, with a lively relish for sallies of undefiled wit and decorous pleasantry. 'He laughed heartily,' says Gleig; 'could trifle with the gayest, and thought it not beneath him to relish a pun.'

With young people he was always a favourite, from his gentle manners and the fatherly interest he showed in their well-being. His capacity for making friends was equalled by his constancy in retaining them. 'All who knew him loved him, and they who knew him most loved him best,' was written of him after his death by one who had known him long and intimately[1]. The same witness speaks of him as the kindest of masters, a benefactor generous even beyond his means, 'in his social hours the most pleasing companion,' a man whose nature was full of the milk of human kindness. Much as he enjoyed his visits in town and country, Hastings was never happier or seen to more advantage than at home. 'It was among his own guests,' wrote an intimate friend, 'at his own table, in his own study, and in the bosom of his own family, that he appeared ever most like himself, and therefore to the greatest advantage[2].'

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 88, part 2.
[2] Gleig.

His diet was very plain; he ate sparingly; his favourite drink was water. He was fond of swimming, and rode almost daily on horseback till he was past eighty. Proud of his good horsemanship, he delighted in taming the most refractory brutes. Of his literary tastes not much is known except that he knew his Horace fairly, that he shared Pitt's fondness for Lucan's 'Pharsalia,' and read Young's 'Night Thoughts' again and again. At a later period he revelled in the poetry of Walter Scott.

Hastings had few, if any, extravagant tastes. But he had no natural turn for thrift, and in India all his time had been engrossed by official duties and pressing public needs. Then came the long agony of his impeachment; and the burthen of consequent debt grew heavier as the war with the French Republic went on. In 1804 the Court of Directors once more came to his rescue from impending bankruptcy by virtually remitting the balance of their previous loan. In the same year Hastings, always grateful for any mark of goodwill, tried hard to dissuade Addington from resigning office in favour of Pitt. In spite of his majority in the Commons, the stop-gap Minister soon convinced his volunteer adviser that resignation was the wisest course for a ministry threatened by a strong coalition at home and an early renewal of war with France[1].

Two years later, when Pitt was dead, and the Grenville Ministry ruled in his place, Hastings privately urged his claim, if not to public office, at least

[1] Gleig, Sir G. C. Lewis.

to public reparation of the wrong which Parliament had done him twenty years before. The new Ministers were willing to grant him a peerage, but refused to ask the Commons for a reversal of their former sentence. On such conditions Hastings promptly declined the peerage, which he had asked for merely to please his wife. The one desire of his heart was to see his character cleared by those who had once branded him as a traitor to his country and false to his trust. There was comfort, however, in knowing that one of his old assailants, the great Lord Wellesley, had lately returned from India a staunch admirer of the man for whose impeachment he had so eagerly voted. He too had learned by hard experience how much easier it is to condemn ignorantly than to understand aright. He too had become a mark for hostile proceedings in the House of Commons; but the Ministry, aided by Fox himself, defeated the motion for his impeachment.

In 1813, at the age of eighty, Hastings was summoned to London to give evidence before both Houses on the question of renewing the Company's Charter. His appearance at the bar of the Commons evoked a storm of cheers; and as he retired, a few hours later, the members all rose with hats off, and 'stood in silence' until he had passed. A few days later he was greeted with equal reverence by the Lords. The gist of his evidence was to uphold the Company's ancient monopoly, to keep 'interlopers' out of India, and to discourage missionary enterprise among a people

peculiarly attached to their ancestral creeds. Such views, however, were already growing out of date, and the Charter Act of that year threw open the trade with India, gave interlopers a limited right of settlement, and opened a way for the endowment of an Anglican bishop in Calcutta.

Some weeks later Hastings underwent at Oxford the ordeal of receiving his Doctor's degree, amidst the cheers of admiring undergraduates. In the following year he was made a Privy Councillor, and was graciously received in private audience by the Prince Regent, who afterwards presented him to the allied sovereigns of Russia and Prussia, as 'the most deserving and one of the worst-used men in the Empire.' In their train he attended the banquet at the Guildhall, the great Thanksgiving at St. Paul's, and the Prince Regent's brilliant fête at Carlton House. Before returning to Daylesford, he took the chair at a dinner given by old Indians to the Duke of Wellington.

About this time his pension was secured to him for the remainder of his life. But the Court of Directors refused to make any sort of provision for his wife. Four years later the dying statesman dictated a last appeal to the Directors for the extension of his annuity to 'the dearest object of all his mortal concerns.' But they gave no more heed to his dying entreaties than they would have given to the whine of a self-convicted beggar[1].

The old man's last years were spent at Daylesford

[1] Gleig.

in quiet happiness, alloyed only by concern for his wife's future. He enjoyed the 'long-seated visits' of his country neighbours, and made pleasant company for his home guests. He strolled about his gardens, and in 1816 constantly overlooked the workmen employed in restoring after his own plans the grey old parish church, which a later squire of Daylesford was to rebuild. In 1818 his health, hitherto good, began to break down. In July, a cancerous swelling in his throat grew daily worse; and after much suffering, borne with patient fortitude—'none of you know what I suffer,' he once said—the white-haired statesman on the 22nd August drew a handkerchief over his face, and passed away without sigh or struggle, in his eighty-sixth year. His remains were laid among the bones of his forefathers in a vault that now lies just beneath the chancel of the new church[1].

An inscription beneath a bust in Westminster Abbey records the services of him whose resolute courage preserved and strengthened our young Indian Empire, and whose organising genius rendered possible the whole course of Indian history from the days of Cornwallis down to those of Dalhousie. Hastings had lived to see nearly half of all India brought directly under British rule, and the very year of his death witnessed the final overthrow of the Maráthá power by the armies of Lord Hastings.

[1] Gleig, *Notes and Queries*, vol. vi. 1870.

INDEX

ADAMS, Major, his brilliant campaign, 34–6.
AIX-LA-CHAPELLE, Peace of, 11.
ALAM-SHÁH (Emperor of Delhi), 20, 23, 37, 41, 77 &c., 191.
ALÍ VARDI KHÁN (Súbahdár of Bengal), 12.
ALLAHÁBÁD, 37, 41; 78–9 &c.
ANDERSON, 128, 171–5.
ARCOT, 19, 153.
ARNI, 156.
ASAF-UD-DAULÁ, (Nawáb-Wazír of Oudh), 105, 181–4, 193.

BAILLIE, Colonel, 150–1.
BARKER, Sir Robert, 75, 82.
BARWELL, Richard, of the Bengal Council, 73, 99, 102 &c., 137, 162.
BASSEIN, capture of, 146.
BAXÁR, battle of, 37.
BEGAMS, The, 104, 181 &c.
BEHÁR, 23, 58 &c.
BENARES, Treaty of, 82.
— city and district, 174–80, 193.
BENGAL, 12, 13, and *passim*.
BERÁR, 141, 144, 151, 152–3, &c.
BHUTÁN, 71.
BLACK HOLE, Night in the, 17.
BOGLE, 73, 127.
BOMBAY, 13, 124 &c.
BRAITHWAITE, Colonel, 155.
BRISTOW, 100, 105, 128 &c., 192.
BURKE, Edmund, 187, 202, 204, 207.
BURNEY, Fanny, 206.
BUSSY, 159.

CAILLAUD, Colonel, 22.
CALCUTTA, 14, and *passim*.
CAMAC, General, 147.
CARNAC, Colonel, 23, 41.
CARTIER, Governor of Bengal, 54, 57.
CHAIT SINGH, Rájá of Benares, 174 &c.
CHAMBERS, Justice, 96, 117, 122.
CHAMPION, Colonel, 87 &c.
CHANÁR, Treaty of, 180 &c.
CIRCARS, The Northern, 25.
CHANDARNAGAR, 19, 143.
CLAVERING, Sir John, of the Bengal Council, 96 &c, 120, 128, 136, 138.
CLIVE, Robert (Lord), 19–22, 41, 42, 56.
COLEBROOKE, Sir George, 49, 55.
COMPANY, The East India, 11, 13, and *passim*.
COOTE, Sir Eyre, 23, 154, 156, 158.
CUDDALORE, 154, 159.

DAKÁITS, 69 &c.
DAYLESFORD, 7, 8, 202 &c.
DECCAN, The, 12, 23 &c.
DELHI, 12, 77–8, 191.
DIRECTORS, Court of, 128, 134, 140, and *passim*.
DRAKE, Roger (Governor of Calcutta), 16, 18.
DUPLEIX, Governor of Pondicherry, 23 &c.
DU PRÉ, Governor of Madras, 44 &c., 47 &c.
DUTCH, in India, 15, 155.

ELLIOT, Alexander, 121, 134, 140, 143.
ELLIOT, Sir Gilbert (Lord Minto), 144.
ELLIS, at Patná, 27, 29, 30 &c.

FALTA, 18, 19.
FARNAVÍS, Nána, 126, 146 &c.
FRANCIS, Philip, of the Bengal Council, 96–7, 100 &c., 107, 128, 133, 142, 162–3, 187.
FRENCH in India, 15, 19, 23, 141, 148, 159.
FULLARTON, Colonel, 159.

GAIKWÁR, The, 146.
GANJÁM, 153.
GANTÚR, Circar, 149.
GODDARD, General, 144, 146, 174, 195.
GURDÁS, Raja, 63.
GWÁLIOR, capture of, 46.

HAIDAR ALÍ, Sultan of Mysore, 24, 45, 46 &c., 147 &c., 156.
HALHED, 68, 195.
HARLAND, Sir Robert, 49.
HASTINGS, Howard, 8, 10.
HASTINGS, Mrs. Imhoff, 43, 137, 191 &c.
HASTINGS, Pynaston, 8, 9.
HASTINGS, Warren, his birth and parentage, 7, 8: his education, 9–11: life in Calcutta, 13–15: at Kásimbázár, 15, 16: a prisoner at large, 16: joins the camp at Falta, 19: his marriage, 19: serves under Clive, 19: at Murshidábád 20: Member of Council in Calcutta, 22: supports Vansittart, 27 &c.: returns home, 39: his scheme of a Persian Professorship, 40: seeks for re-employment, 40: embarks for Madras, 40: his illness and its sequel, 43: second in Council at Madras, 48: his zeal for the Company's interests, 49, 50: his special duties, 51: sails for Calcutta, 55: becomes Governor of Fort William, 57: stands forth as Diwán, 59: resettles the land revenue, 60, 61: reorganises the civil and criminal courts, 62: remodels the Nawáb's household, 63: represses corrupt practices, 63: his multifarious duties, 65: reforms the revenue system, 67: codifies the native law, 68: his measures against the Dakáits, 69–70: and the Sanyásis, 70: helps Kúch Behar, 71: sends Bogle and Turner to Tibet, 71–3: his administrative successes, 73–4: his influence in council, 74–5: his change of policy towards Sháh Alam, 78–80: transfers Kora and Allahábád to Shujá, 81: his agreement with the Wazír, 82; the true key to his policy, 83–5: he is made Governor-General of Bengal, 94: his struggles with the new Councillors, 98–106: his appeals to England, 107: he breaks up the council-meeting, 111: his countercharge against Nanda-Kumár, 114: his sworn declaration before the Judges, 119: his innocence of Nanda-Kumár's death, 120: his letters to Dr. Johnson and Lord Mansfield, 122: he is overruled on matters of foreign policy, 125: rejects Lord Pigot's appeal from Madras, 127: recovers his power on Monson's death, 128: his schemes for extending the Company's power, 133: his successful struggle with Clavering, 136–7: he marries Mrs. Imhoff, 138: makes good use of his casting-vote, 139–140: his efforts to counteract French intrigue at Poona, 141: his instructions to Governor Hornby, 142: his boldness on the outbreak of war, 143: orders Goddard to march to Bombay, 144; his 'frantic military ex-

plots,' 146: he conciliates the Nizám, 149: confronts new dangers in Southern India, 151–2: his treaty with Sindhia and the Peshwá, 157: his duel with Francis, 164: 'I have power, and will employ it,' 164: his peace-offering to Sir Elijah Impey, 168: his efforts to promote learning and commerce, 170–71: his new Board of Revenue, 171: his letter to Major Scott, 172: his demands on Chait Singh, 174–8: his journey to Benares and its results, 178–80: his treaty with the Wazír at Chanár, 182: his indignant reply to the Court of Directors, 187: he is thanked by the Proprietors, 190: sends envoys to Delhi, 191: parts from Mrs. Hastings, 192: his last journey up the country, 192–4: reviews Colonel Pearse's brigade, 194: his services to art and learning, 195: extent of his work in India, 196–200: his voyage home, 201: becomes owner of Daylesford, 202: his reply to Burke's attack, 203: is impeached before the Lords, 204: appears for trial in Westminster Hall, 205: his manly speech in defence, 207: his acquittal after seven years, 209: receives a pension from the India House, 210: his way of life at Daylesford, 211: his appeal to the new ministry, 213: his reception by the Lords and Commons, 213: honours bestowed on him in his old age, 214: his last years and death, 215.

Holwell, 17, 22.

Hornby, Governor of Bombay, 141 &c.

Hughes, Admiral Sir Edward, 155.

Hyde, Judge of Supreme Court, *96.*

Imhoff, Baron, 43, 195.

Imhoff, Baroness, 43–137 (see also Mrs. Hastings).

Impey, Sir Elijah, Chief Justice of Bengal, 10, 96, 115 &c., 166, 168, 188, 192.

Jafar Alí Khán, Nawáb, 19-21, 36.

Johnson, Dr. Samuel, 39, 122.

Karnatic, The, 19, 44, 150 &c.

Kásim Alí Khán, Nawáb, 31–36.

Kásimbázár, 16, 20.

Kúch-Behar, 71.

Lally, 23.

Le Maistre, Judge of Supreme Court, 96.

Lucknow, 99, 104, 183, 193.

Macartney, Lord, Governor of Madras, 157, 160, 191.

Macaulay, Lord, 11, 26, 39 &c., 108, 117, 168.

Maclnnes, Colonel, 107, 132.

Mádhají Sindhia, 78, 146–7, 157, 180, 191, 193.

Mádhu Rao, Peshwá, 77.

Mangalore, Treaty of, 160.

Manni Begam, 63.

Mansfield, Lord, 68, 122.

Maráthás, The, 45 &c., 77, 84 &c., 125–6, 144–7, 157.

Middleton, Nathaniel, 9, 104, 183.

Monghyr, 30 &c.

Monson, Colonel, of the Bengal Council, 96 &c., 127.

Mudají, Bhonsla, of Berár, 141, 151.

Mughal Empire, The, 12 and *passim.*

Muhammad Alí, Nawáb of the Karnatic, 48, 50, 59, 127 &c.

Muhammad Raza, Khán, 48, 58, 66 &c.

Munro, Sir Hector, 37, 150, 155.

Murshidábád, 16, 20 &c.

Mysore, 45–7, 147, 158 &c.

NANDA-KUMÁR, RÁJÁ, 63, 110, 112—118.
NEGAPATAM, 154.
NIZAM ALÍ, 44, 45, 149.
NORTH, Lord, 106, 130–1, 190.

PÁNÍPAT, battle of, 23.
PATNA, 27, 29, 34 &c.
PEARSE, Colonel Thomas, 152, 194.
PIGOT, Lord, Governor of Madras, 127–28.
PITT, William, 190, 194, 202.
PLASSEY, battle of, 19.
PÓLLILÚR, battle of, 154.
PONDICHERRY, 23, 143.
POPHAM, Colonel, 146, 179.
PORTO NOVO, battle of, 154.
PRINCE REGENT, The, 214.
PURANDHAR, Treaty of, 125.

RÁGHUBA, 122, 126 &c.
RÁHMAT KHÁN (Háfiz), 81 &c.
REVENUE, Board of, 171.
ROHILKHAND, 77, 85, 87–89.
ROHILLÁS, The, 77, 83, 86–7.
ROHILLÁ WAR, 86–7.
RUMBOLD, Sir Thomas, 148, 150.

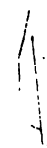
SADR DIWÁNI ADÁLAT, 62.
SADR NIZÁMAT ADÁLAT, 62.
SALBÁI, Treaty of, 157.
SANYÁSI FAKÍRS, 70–1.
SCOTT, Major John, 170, 204.
SHERIDAN, Richard Brinsley, 204, 206.
SHITÁB RÁI RÁJÁ, 58, 65 &c.
SHUJÁ-UD-DAULÁ, Wazír of Oudh, 37, 41, 81, 85 &c., 104.
SMITH, Colonel, 45.
SUAN, battle of, 23.
SUFFREIN, Admiral, 155.
SULIVAN, Laurence, 55 &c.
SUMRU (Walter Reinhardt); 35–6.
SUPREME COURT, The, 94, 165–9.
SURÁJ-UD-DAULÁ, Viceroy of Bengal, 16, 19,
SURÁT, Treaty of, 123–4.
STEPHEN, Sir J. Fitzjames, 119 &c.
STUART, General, 159.

TANJORE, 127, 155.
THURLOW, Lord Chancellor, 202.
TIBET, Missions to, 73.
TIPÚ, Sultan, 154 &c., 160.

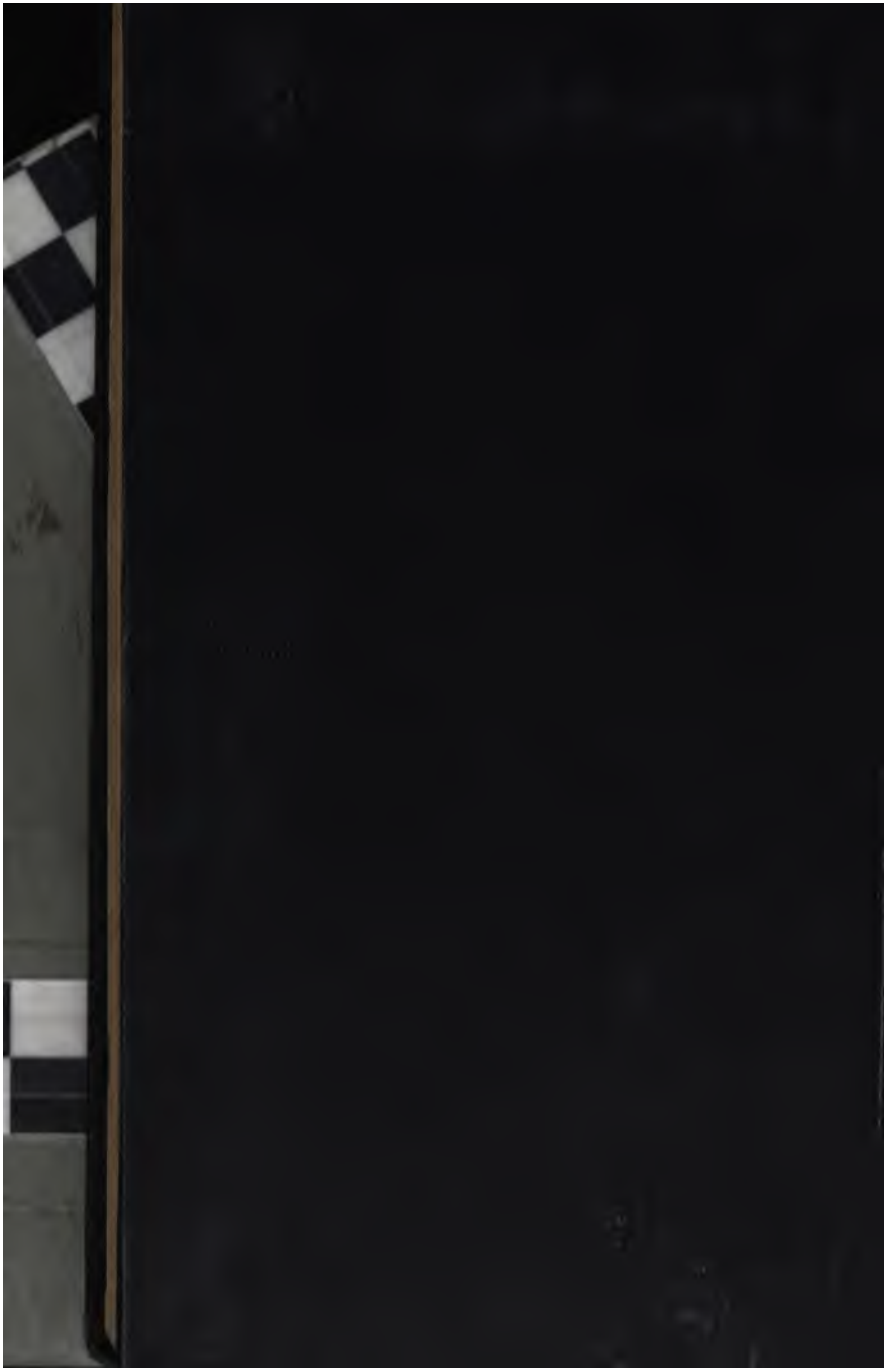
VANSITTART, Governor of Bengal, 20, 22, 30, 31 &c.

WANDIWASH, 153–54.
WARGAON, Convention of, 144.
WATSON, Admiral, 19.
WELLESLEY, Marquis, 213.
WHELER, of the Bengal Council, 139, 143, 172, 178.
WHITEHILL, Governor of Madras, 150–1.

ZOFFANY, 195.



STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

To avoid fine, this book should be returned on or before the date last stamped below.

NOV 1 0 1917
NOV 12 1917
NOV 13 1917
FEB 9 1921
FEB 10 1921
FEB 11 1921
P 28'49 G R